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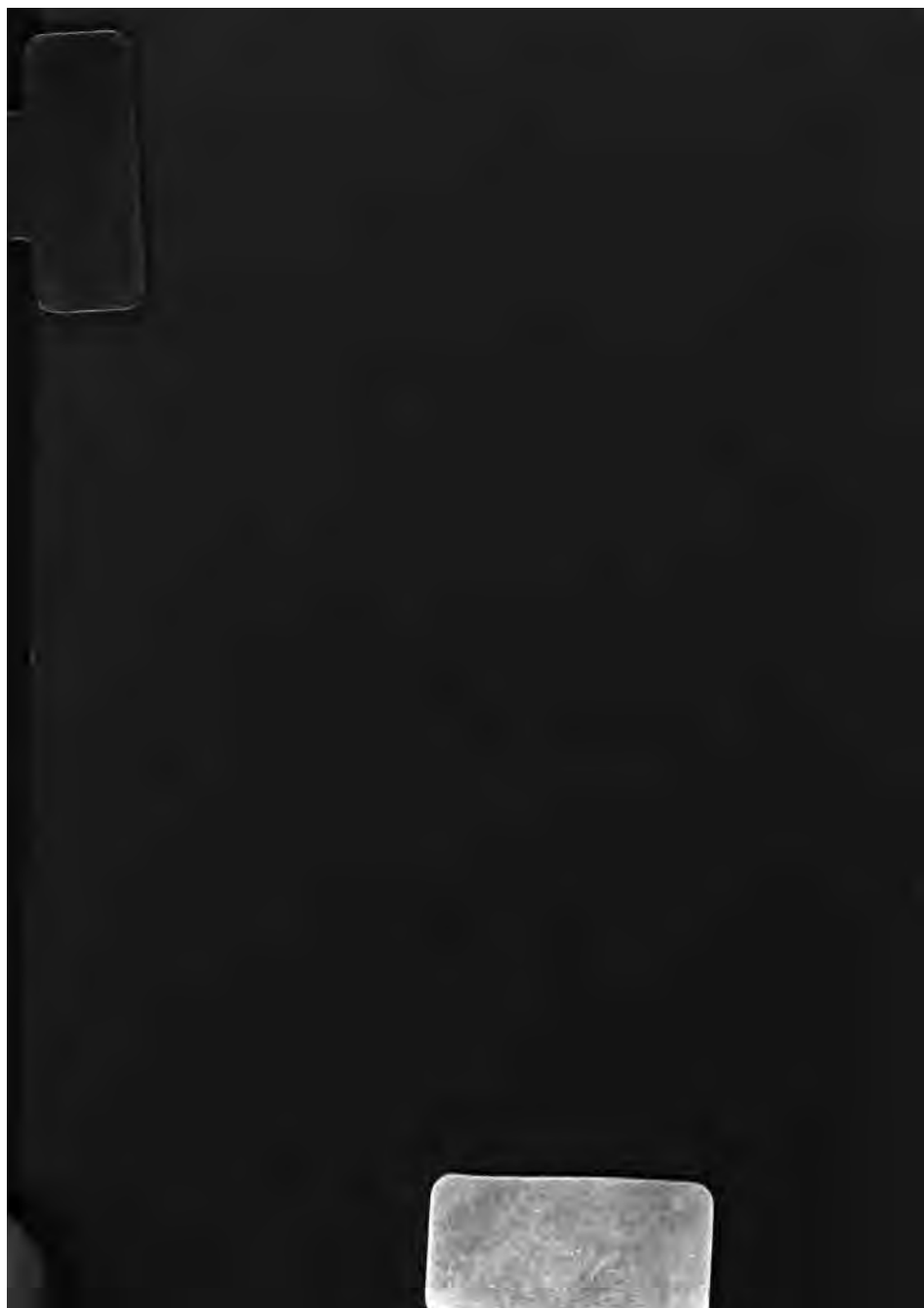
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BUYING AND SELLING AND GETTING GAIN.

BY

J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.,

Author of "First Principles of Ecclesiastical Truth," "The Home Life," &c.

First Series.



LONDON:
HODDER AND STOUGHTON,
27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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MDCCCLXXII.



PREFACE.

THIS little volume contains a series of pastoral addresses. By this I mean such practical exhortations as a pastor, anxious for the moral welfare and culture of the members of his congregation, might address to them on the prevalent temptations, follies and vices of the times. Most of them were thus delivered, and in all the tone of a personal pastoral address is adopted. It will be seen at once that nothing like exhaustive treatment of the important subjects with which they deal is aimed at ; but rather direct, pointed, pungent

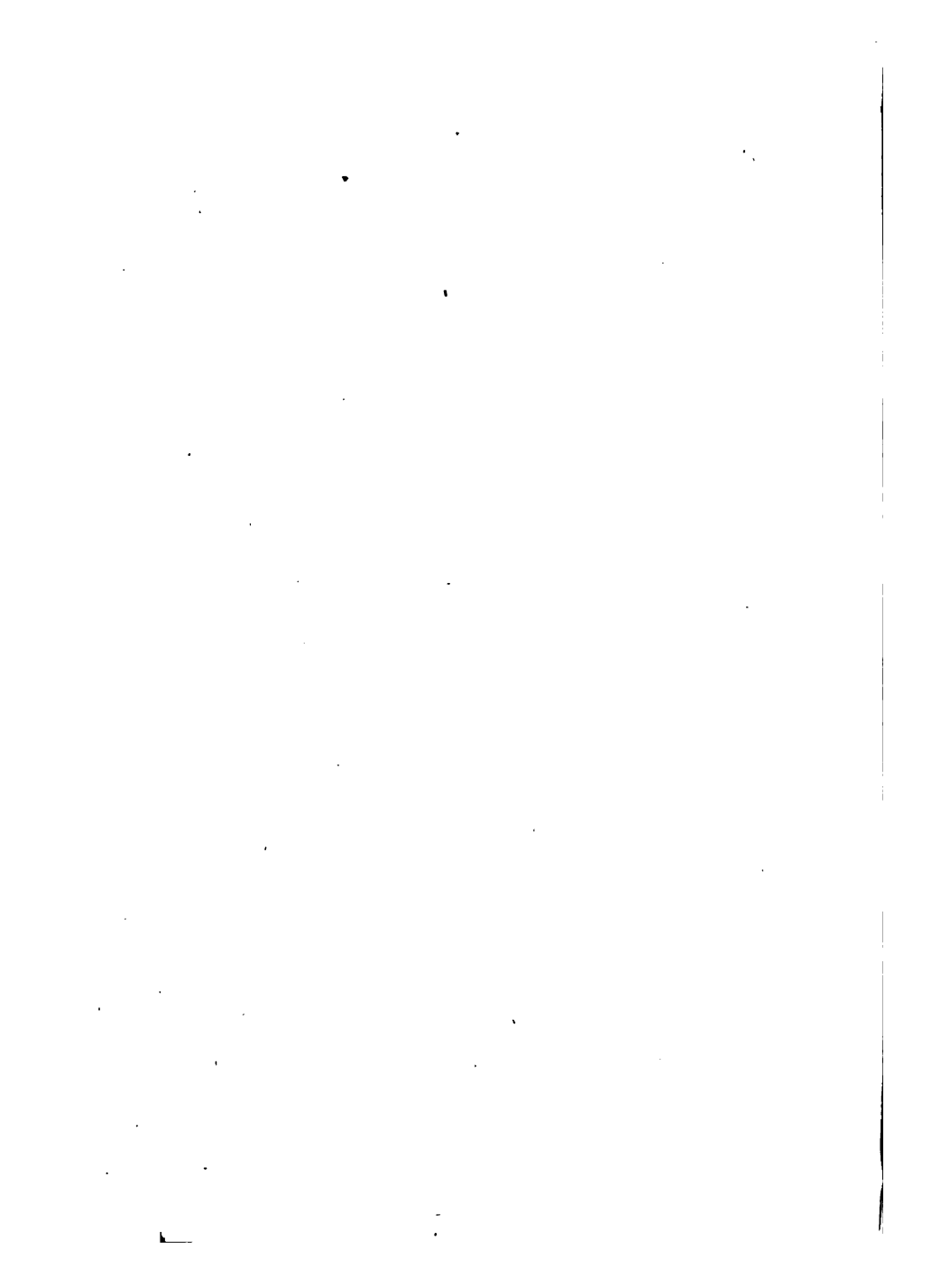
remonstrance, exhortation and appeal. There is a large proportion of young people in the congregation to which it is my privilege to minister. I always have felt, and always shall feel, a deep and special interest in the young. They have to make the future of our country, and in no small measure the future of the world.

It is an age of special temptation to the young ; inasmuch as they enjoy a much larger freedom, and live much more in the full throng of life, than was the case in my young days. These are perilous times for young people. But perilous times after all are great times to live in. If the temptations are many, the helps also will be many. If there is much that is demoralizing, there is much also that is elevating, ennobling, saving, in the very atmosphere of our times. If I can but add a little to the saving element in this atmosphere of our life, and destroy a little of that which is

noxious and degrading, I shall be deeply thankful.
On this errand this little pastoral book is sent
forth.

J. BALDWIN BROWN.

*Kent Villa, Brixton Hill,
Christmas, 1871.*



YOUNG MEN AND MAIDENS.



OUR YOUNG MEN.

"Young man, I say unto thee, Arise."—LUKE vii. 14.

IT may seem something like a perversion of Scripture to urge this as Christ's appeal to the young men into whose hands these pages may fall. But it *is* His appeal; His explicit and emphatic charge, "*Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*" There is a terrible deadness about all of us. Our manners and morals, our relations to our fellow-men, our trade life, our Church life, our State life, in spite of our vehement and restless activity, seem all well-nigh dead together, when we look at them in the light of the Great Biography, or even compare ourselves with the ages in which a living Spirit was visibly stirring the great heart of humanity, parent of heroic deeds and ministries which seem beyond our powers of production now. And yet these com-

parisons of the present with the past are, in one sense, illusory. Had we lived in those times which seem so grand and fair, we should have been found uttering the same regrets. It is really an ideal past with which we are always tempted to compare our present ; the earthly image of that life whose vision, pure, intense, full of joyous activity and fruitfulness, comes sometimes in musing hours like a white angel into our valley of the shadow of death. We give the vision a local habitation in the ages of the past, but it is nowhere on earth ; it never has been, it never will be, until the hope of the Son of man about humanity is fulfilled. Yet in point of unselfish devotion and heroic endeavour we can hardly believe that our own age stands out nobly, in the eyes of calm, impartial watchers on high, compared with ages which might be selected from the past ; while, in comparison with the hopes with which the Advent filled men's hearts, our life is poor and dead indeed.

I am about to endeavour to trace, in a free, simple, and pastoral address, the claim which Christ seems to be urging with special emphasis, by the critical character of the times in which we are living, on the various classes of which our society is composed. The most important class on the whole, the class into whose hands the main

conduct of the business of life in the next generation will fall, I address in the present paper.

The claim of the age upon its young men ! Surely, if ever an age had a right to urge a large claim upon its children, it is this wonderful age in which it is our privilege to live. It seems to me that our young men little realize how we, their elders, look upon these times and the times that are coming, in which they will have to play their part. I often think, if the lads and girls whom I see growing up around me live to be as old as I am, what a marvellous world they will have before them,—what glorious things, and perhaps what fearful things, they will see. The rate of our progress in these days is simply tremendous. The forces which nature is placing at our service, and the power to handle them with which advancing intellectual culture endows us, make the vast creation our vassal. We analyze the sun, we weigh the stars, we yoke the lightning, we outstrip the day. Were the great problem of modern science solved, could we yoke the one physical force, whatever its nature and name, which transmits our messages, to our carriages and our candlesticks, could we make it on cheap terms draw our trains and illumine our night, it would complete the greatest revolution ever accomplished in the history

of our world. We are living through the revolution ; our children may see it crowned. If the discoveries and inventions of the next generation are at all commensurate in their rate of development with that of the last few years, the world will be a glorious world to live in, or a terrible ; and you young men will have to settle which.

I see a vision of a world opening up before us as a possible future, in which, if a leading, perhaps the leading, school of thought in our times has its way and works its will, it will be simply a terrible thing to live. I see a vision of a world in which man shall be cultivated to the very highest pitch of power and refinement, sensitive in every point and through every pore, with open vision of all the beauty and splendour of the universe, full of god-like faculty, high aspiration, constant energy ; but in which he shall have no shield against pain, no solace for the inevitable sorrow, no world behind the veil to which he may lift the hopes of his suffering, struggling spirit, and no destiny that he can realize loftier than a brute's. But I see another vision of a world realizable in the near future, in which all this affluence of knowledge, power, and possession shall be in the hand of a being developed to something of the ancient godlike proportion, which, lost by Adam, Christ came to restore ;

in which dignity, purity, wisdom, righteousness, and charity shall rule the man as royally as the man rules the forces of the creation ; in which the wrongs and miseries of our social state shall be supplanted by some fair fulfilment of the prophet's vision and the poet's dream ; in which men weary of war and slaughter, weary of the selfish policies which make our social life a battle-field whose victims outnumber the victims of war, shall band themselves under the sceptre of the Prince of Peace, to try what peace can do to gladden, enrich, and bless mankind.

We are living manifestly in the vortex of a great social revolution. Things in their present form, at their present pitch, cannot endure. There is the straining of expectation of great changes everywhere. The old order of society is breaking up and vanishing. New ideas, new relations, new organizations, new principles of action, new beliefs, are constituting themselves. The shape which they shall take, and, what is more important, the spirit which is to inspire them, depends mainly, young men, on you. "*Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.*" Arise to the new claim the age is urging, the new need that Christ is proclaiming. Take new and larger measures of your life, its duties and surroundings, and stir up your soul to play a part

of which you will not be ashamed when you look back upon it all from the victorious thrones which await the children of the resurrection there.

In connection with this remarkable outburst of power in all that concerns man's intellectual life, his knowledge of the secrets and mastery of the resources of this material sphere, there seems to me to be a growing poverty and deadness in the moral and spiritual region of our lives. The Church has been for some time past something like the crater of an extinct volcano, which is perhaps the dreariest and most desolate thing that the sun shines upon. The *débris* of a dead activity form the ghastliest of all ruins. The forsaken homes of the oldest and richest civilizations are now the densest and deadliest jungles that the earth holds upon its breast. Something like this I suppose, to the eye of Christ, was the Jewish Church of His times. And we may be living on the cold ashes of past flashing and kindling fires. The intense energy of the revival of the last century, which was one of the very mightiest of the influences which saved us from such ruin as the Revolution wrought in France, and which left us the great Evangelical party as its legacy, seems as if it had burnt up well-nigh all the fuel of fervour which the world could furnish. The Evangelical movement has long

been languishing, empty of all enthusiasm and passion, maintaining old forms of thought, phrase, and action with jealous vigilance, but destitute of the glow, the movement, and above all the assimilative force of life. We live, but as our good Dr. Watts not unhappily sings, "At this poor dying rate." We do but little in these days to attract, constrain, and inspire men. And the poverty and deadness of the Church makes deadness everywhere in the higher sphere. Intellectual power is in magnificent development. Is it a necessary law that such an age—an age of immense intellectual activity and progress—shall always be characterized by poverty of moral and spiritual life? Is our nation, our world, not continent of both movements simultaneously? Of old, two great peoples, each possessing an intense vitality, divided between them the culture of mankind; the one monopolizing almost exclusively the intellectual, the other the spiritual sphere. Is this typical? Is it a law for all time? If a man is straining his faculties to discern all he can, to enlarge his store of knowledge of himself and of his world, must he of necessity at the same time fold the wings of his higher aspiration and endeavour, and live as if knowledge would save him; as if the quiet fulfilment of the law of his nature, in harmony with the

stars above and the flowers around him, were all that he was sent into this world to accomplish, were all that he had to hope for to brighten and to bless his life ?

But this is far from being the saddest part of the aspect of things around us. What chiefly oppresses me with anxiety about the future is the kind of thing which our young people, and notably our young men, think of and talk of as life. As far as young men of business are concerned, the pressure of commercial pursuits has much to answer for. Some years ago no doubt the strain was stronger than the average man could bear without grave moral detriment. Young men, worn out by excessive toil, had no time, no strength, no heart, for the higher pursuits and interests. They passed easily and naturally from strong toil to strong and coarse recreation. It demanded a strong stimulant to stir their jaded faculties to anything like pleasure in the amusements of the hour. But the times have changed, and as far as the time and toil exacted by business is concerned, very much for the better.* Have the habits changed with them

* Old men of business speak scornfully, as a rule, of the modern hours of work. They could tell tales of drudgery which make the modern scale seem slight indeed ; and in point of mere time, no doubt with justice. But the real

in anything like a commensurate degree? Is there a clear and marked advance in the interest taken in and the time devoted to intellectual culture? Does home grow in beauty and charm? Is woman what she once was to man—a comrade and help-mate, to be sought with reverent earnestness and honoured with loyal devotion? Or is the young man's talk about women such as they would spend on a pastime or on a slave? I tremble at the talk about women which young men not otherwise evil-minded indulge in without scruple. I tremble more at the mind and the manners in our young girls which render it possible. I tremble to think of the myriad ministers to vice and degradation, to destruction of heart, soul, body, and the health of coming generations, who infest and infect our great cities; and at the coarse, garish, unlovely, ignoble, and often hateful character of the chosen public amusements of a great class of our young men. All interest in the play of intellect and imagination in our public entertainments seems to have died out. How are men to care for it in public when it occupies no moment of their private question is the pressure; and there can be no doubt, I imagine, that the pressure of modern business is stronger. The pace is more rapid. Far more is crowded into the time; while the number and complexity of the transactions make business far more harassing than of old.

hours? The highest joy, the play of the faculties of thought and imagination in one hemisphere of man's nature, the play of still more godlike qualities, his unselfish devotion, his ministry, his charity, in the other, seems quite untasted by, unknown to, the great mass of our modern young men. Great spectacles are all that they care for. As Rome winds up her Easter festival with a grand Girandola, which is the real key to the whole celebration, so the transformation scene in a Christmas pantomime might be selected as the supreme recreation of our modern life. The man who talks about the higher things is just laughed at or sneered down. Our youths pray only to be let alone, that they may see and enjoy life!

Thank God that there is a large admixture of the nobler sort with the baser. But these know well and sadly what a world of young life it is in which they try to keep the nobler aims and hopes in sight. Their hearts are saddened, sickened, daily by the great mass of dulness, selfishness, vanity, impurity, falsehood, license of all sorts, that lies like a dead-weight on the higher, the diviner life of our times. It is struggling to express itself, to get free to speak and to work; but the deadness of the age is against it, and crushes it down. There is a damp, foul atmosphere abroad, born of our

worldly prosperity and pride ; you might feel its deadly, blasting breath in full force in Paris before this tremendous fiery purgation, but it is here too, all round us, in our homes, and in our hearts. The Divine spark will not kindle in it. The sacred fire is here ; blessed be God, that is never withdrawn. It touches one and another. But there is no glow, no flame. We need a deep, searching, purging visitation. We need to have our life—personal, domestic, social, religious—renewed at its very springs. We need a resurrection from the darkness and deadness into which we have fallen, to the power, the life, the joy, of the sphere to which Christ stooped to lift the world. And where is it to come from ? How is it to reach us ? “YOUNG MAN, I SAY UNTO THEE, ARISE.”

And now what is it, what does it mean when Christ says to us, Arise ?

I. Arise to the understanding of all that a man's life means, all that it involves at such an age as this. As I have said already, there are times in which it may be a very blessed thing to live, and there are times in which it may be very terrible. I do not envy the dulness of that man's nature, who does not sometimes see before him a vision of a state of things in which, if certain forces at work around us were to develop themselves unrestrained,

life would be too sad, too heavily burdened, to be endured. Such ages have been in the world's history. The age of the advent of the Lord was such a time, the first age of Imperial Rome. Life was fast becoming intolerable to the thoughtful and high-minded, who cared to use their "discourse of reason," "looking before and after," when the Lord appeared to redeem it. Such ages may be again, if we forget Christ, if we lose hold on Christ, and suffer all that Christ came to destroy to riot at will. But it is a time which ought to be full of inspiration to natures of the higher strain. Life was never so wealthy, so pregnant as now. Man's powers were never so largely developed. He has never had such vision of the wonderful, the glorious surroundings of his world. All the world too is open to his footsteps. The grand tour, which used to mean the chief capitals of Western Europe, now runs right round the world. Young men educating themselves for the public service consider a voyage round the world both a desirable and feasible element in their education. Nay, for health or pleasure it is as easy and natural now to circumnavigate the globe, as it was a few years ago to visit the baths of Germany or the Pyrenees. Many a young man of business in these days is in the way of a voyage to distant and

splendid regions, of seeing all the sights and hearing all the sounds of this glorious creation, and enriching himself with all the treasures of the world. And for all there is an immense expansion of thought and interest, a grand widening of the horizon of life. What we want is the awakening, the rising up of the soul to take it in. We want man's interest, the interest of his heart and soul, kindled in all this wealth of power and beauty; we want our hearts lifted up in joy and thankfulness to Him who has cast our lot in such a time and in such a world. If there be no stirring of the inner faculty, if this wealth of power is to flow in upon man, and he is to occupy himself wholly with its use within the bounds of this life, he will be like the miser gorged with gold, and haunted with the fear of dying in a workhouse. Man, rich, wise, strong, able to handle all the forces of the universe with godlike mastery, will just shrivel amidst it all to the measure of a pigmy, and pray at last to be delivered from the intolerable burden of an aimless, profitless, hopeless life.

Arise, then, to take true measure of life and its surroundings. Do not be content to exist merely; arise to live. Know that the pure joy of life is his, and his alone, whose soul is at rest on God, who is glad with the light of His countenance, while the

busy faculties traverse their round of duty, and take in all the bright impressions of all these glorious worlds. As well may you talk of the joys of health to a man whose heart beats feebly, and drives the blood in a sluggish current through his veins, as talk of the joy of life to a man whose heart is conscious of no glad response to the appeals and the claims of God. Rich as your life is in one sense, splendid as is your possession, you are dead while you live, if this higher world of interest and hope is closed against your spirit; if God's will is an empty phrase to you, and Christ's love a sentimental dream. Dead while you live, with a great universe of throbbing, glowing, glorious life around you, life of which God's breath is the inspiration, and God's will is the law. Young man, I say unto thee, arise! Arise to life!—life of which the angels might yearn to be partakers! life which makes you the comrade, the brother, of the only begotten Son of God!

II. Arise to follow the Son of man in the regeneration of the world around you.

Oh! for some preacher with tongue of fire like St. Bernard, that he might preach to us a new and more blessed Crusade. Nothing since Pentecost has stirred man's heart so deeply, and moved man's life so mightily, as that preaching which swept

Christendom like a flood to captive desecrated Palestine, to wrest from the infidel the sepulchre of the Lord. The object was a vain one, the mere dream of the imagination. Palestine, could it have been occupied in permanence, could but have been a source of strife and weakness to Christendom; and as for the Holy Sepulchre, "*He is not here, but risen,*" is the legend which Heaven has written over that tomb. What stirred men, roused them to heroic effort and endurance, fired them with enthusiastic devotion, was the thought that they were fighting for Christ, that it was His call that they were obeying, His ends they were pursuing, His well-done they were winning, His welcome to the heavenly mansions they were assuring, if they bore themselves bravely in that war. We want the spirit of the Crusade rekindled, with wiser counsels and nobler aims. The age is mutely appealing to all young men to take the cross, and in Christ's name, by Christ's strength, wage exterminating warfare against the vice, the stupidity, the selfishness, which are preying on society, and wasting it to death.

I. Vice was destroying society by inches when the Lord appeared, and a principle of purity was quickened in its heart which literally saved it from death. It needs to be saved again. The wreck of

health, vigour, life, and all that man holds most precious, which we owe yearly to drunkenness, wantonness, and crime, is telling with terrible force on the vital stamina of our country. How many of the royal races of Europe are worn out, utter wrecks of manly power, through the vice and luxury of generations! The wine-cup and the harlot are doing the same murderous work in our life. We want to have a crusade preached against them. We need young men fired with the thought that they are called by Christ to be the saviours of society from the sins that are wasting it; to render to their country and to humanity the noblest service by fighting with voice and hand against these deadly foes that menace our very life; and will, if they are allowed to run riot, inevitably drag us down to the pit. Young men, rise up to stand against it and destroy it. Lift up against it the standard of the cross. Be known as Christ's soldiers, banded and pledged to its overthrow. Let your conversation be pure from the taint of uncleanness; and never let the wine-cup rob you of your power to stand for Christ against any form of sensual sin. Rebuke and frown down the young man's talk, and the habit of life it engenders; you know what I mean. Say to those who love it, It is just this which is degrading and destroying us as

a people. Young men may call it life, and find their pleasure and sometimes base pride in it, but England is likely to die of it. Let your soul be clear of your country's blood. This may seem strong language. But it is not one whit too strong. Unless our young men rise *en masse*, and make drunkenness and harlotry shameful and hateful, I see no hope for us but growing demoralization and decay. The last few years have seen a great moral conquest achieved over habits of drinking in what are called the upper and middle classes of society. Is there no hope that it may rapidly spread downwards; and that harlotry, which is hardly touched yet, may be branded with a yet deeper stain? Vice is simply self-murder. A vicious community is suicidal. We want men for the rescue; men whose lips and lives shall bear stern witness against the murder, until even the base grow frightened, and abandon the revel and the brothel in very shame.

2. There is that which, for want of a more definite name, I have called stupidity, which is weighing like a nightmare on our lives. I mean the utter dreary senselessness of much of our social habit and observance, our intercourse, our amusements, our work, and our play. We need to have society lifted up bodily to a higher level of interest

in things worthy of interest, and contempt for things which seek to engage us, and which are worthier, on the whole, of fools or of brutes. No radical changes can be made in a moment. At least, those radical changes which seem to be made in a moment in times of revolution, are always found to be the fruits of long preparation, and many unknown toils and tears. It is only strong and wide opinion, acting steadily year after year, which changes the habits and morals of a people. But we can begin. We can cultivate a love for reality, and cherish a becoming scorn for frauds and shams. The tawdry tinsel fineness which we are so fond of in our dress and our houses, we can learn heartily to despise. We can dress simply with grace and beauty ; soberly, eschewing all cheap and gaudy effects. We can have form, beauty, and artistic ornament, instead of glaring colours and gilding, in our houses. There seems to be a love of beautiful form and ornament in domestic architecture and furniture developing itself, if one may judge by the many houses (few in comparison with the mass, but many as compared with the one or two to be seen at rare intervals a generation ago) which one sees rising in our great towns and their suburbs, on whose structure and adornment some earnest thought has been not unprofitably spent. We hail

this as a feature of happy augury in our life. They are rendering good service to society who are endeavouring to develop it to the utmost of their power. A crusade against ugliness and tawdriness in our habits and surroundings will be nobly helpful to that greater crusade of which we are speaking now.

Again, to pass up a step higher, we can teach ourselves to prefer the society in which the brain is of some use, to that in which the chief requisitions seem to be laid on the limbs, the eyes, or the hair. We can insist on entertainment that gives the nobler part of us some exercise ; and declare that we find that to be unutterably wearisome which seeks its triumph in a perpetual grin. We can interest ourselves in meetings that have some instruction and culture for their object ; we can measure less the power of a preacher by his startling paradoxes, dramatic gestures, or obtrusive vanities, while we cease to reckon it the chief grace of a lecturer that he can keep his audience perpetually amused. In short, we can live as if we had a splendid wealth of faculty to cultivate, and but brief time for the work ; as if the school-days were slipping rapidly away, and we were to stand soon for examination before the Assessors of Heaven, and to take the place which we are to

keep through eternity. We can put more earnestness into life, more nobleness ; and brand the mark of our scorn on the frivolity, the vanity, the stupidity, the luxury, and the vulgar splendour of our times.

3. We can take the cross against the selfishness which is the fruitful, teeming parent of the miseries of the world.

I have said that from one point of view it is profoundly sad to live in such an age as this. The instruments of progress become in selfish hands the instruments of woe and misery to mankind. But for the railroad and the telegraph, armies would not have been fighting on the fields of France during the last winter's bitter weather ; brave soldiers would not have been lying by thousands on the blood-stained snow, freezing literally to death. A hundred years ago a general who should keep his troops out through such cold as that, would have been thought a savage rather than a man. But our modern appliances render it possible, and so it is done, and on a scale which casts all ancient horrors of war into the shade. And there is but one thing that can help us. It is not Christian truth, Christian habits, Christian civilisation ; we have had all these for ages, and they have proved themselves unable to withstand the

strain of the passions and the selfishness of mankind. The only helper of our need is Christ; His living presence with, and rule over, human hearts. The world's future hangs on those to whom Christ is the living Teacher, Saviour, and King. Let the number of those who love Him, who live in holy fellowship with Him, who have received His Spirit, die down in our land, in our world, and Christian civilisation will go the way of pagan civilisation, to the abyss of sensuality and despair. There is no Saviour for you, for me, for the poor, for society, but Christ. He alone can grapple with the world's selfishness, and bind it; He alone can master the demon, and cast it out. His reign alone can make sad hearts glad, poor men patient, oppressed classes and peoples free. Arise! then, arise! to the fellowship of the Saviour. Christ has sought thee, found thee, and now He claims thee. NOW, "FOR ALL THINGS ARE NOW READY." Make this glad season gladder by taking the fountain of all joy and gladness into your heart. Year by year the need grows more pressing. Each year adds something to the darkness, the wrong, the poverty, the sadness of mankind. Now let the revival begin. Pray for a new outburst of the power which at Pentecost saved a dying world, and which alone can save us now.

And if the Lord's need is pressing, if the world's need is pressing, more profoundly pressing is yours. The death-life you are content to live is becoming death in earnest. Every year that you hold your heart back from Christ, the pulse grows feebler, the heart grows colder, the crust hardens around the spirit; you are settling into a living grave. And now, while the ear can still recognize the heavenly tones, while the eye can still trace the gleam of the light of the eternal world, while celestial things have some faint reality, while hell has some terror, and heaven some hope, before every faculty sinks into idiotic dulness, before the eye grows dim with the glaze of death, before the soul settles into the fatal slumber, before the devil whom you have served claims his own, YOUNG MAN, I SAY UNTO THEE, ARISE!

OUR YOUNG WOMEN.

THERE is thus much of truth at any rate at the bottom of the vehement wrangling about woman's rights, of which we happily hear less and less, that if any souls or any classes think in serious earnest that they have a vocation for any other career than that which society seems to have marked out for them, the very best thing which they can possibly do is to try. Liberty will discover to us in time the order of heaven, and liberty alone. Throw up the bars, and let the adventurers out into the world which they pine for. It is the only policy. They will find out then full surely, by conclusive evidence, whether it is the world which Heaven meant for them ; and if, as may well happen to all of us, they chance to be disappointed, and find their Elim Marah, they will settle steadily for the future to the old life and the old work. My faith is so firm in the wisdom and power of

the Divine ordinance, whereby man was made male and female—man I say, “*Neither the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord,*” that is, in the perfect form of manhood which the Lord set before Himself when He made the world—that I cherish the calmest assurance that the widest experiment will but reveal to man the sacred dignity of manliness, and to woman the sacred power of womanliness, and will make all attempts to cross and confound their several and equally noble functions impossible for the future. By all means let women have the widest liberty of study and vocation ; let them be doctors, *savans*, professors, advocates, members of Parliament, if they please ; not because we desire to see them wrangling in horsehair wigs, or trying to catch the shy eye of the Speaker, but because a thorough trial will lay these and a hundred other dreamy desires at rest for ever.

The free intellectual atmosphere in which we live in England—everything being in the main free to everybody, women reading the same books, magazines, and journals as men—inevitably stimulates a restless longing to pass over the accustomed and, as society holds, sacred bounds. Up to a certain point of age and culture, woman’s intellect is probably both keener and clearer than man’s ;

while the high cultivation which is easily within the reach of our young girls, naturally provokes the desire for a wider, a manlier theatre of action than that in which—the nobler moral nature being but poorly developed the while—they think they are doomed to pass their days. We have to consider too the number of women in each generation, of unquestionably virile power, able to hold their own successfully with all but the very loftiest men—I suppose Plato, Cæsar, Bacon, Shakspeare, and their peers must be masculine to the end of time—and able too, through the new facilities which these times afford, to make their challenge heard, and to force their claim for a free career in any manly vocation on the attention of the public. Add to this the fact that hundreds of thousands of women in our crowded land must of necessity remain single, must fight their own battle, and force their own way, who also are able to make known the hard conditions of their lot, and to demand that all traditional and conventional hindrances shall be removed out of their path. Sum up all these, and I think there can be no ground to wonder that the woman's rights movement has been started in England and America in our times, and that it is one of the serious difficulties that lie in our way.

These troubles of freedom and culture are grave ones, but they are not the gravest. The saddest, infinitely the saddest condition is the quiet of stagnation, the only way on for that is by the frenzy of revolution or the torpor of death. The political quiet of a Cæsarean Empire is a far sadder and more dangerous thing in the end than the maddest license of a Republic. And it is true through the whole scale. So let us take the troubles and terrors—for there *is* something terrible to well-balanced minds in a woman's rights millennium—let us take even the terrors which spring from our culture and liberty thankfully. At any rate, God has delivered us from stagnation; and where there is life and freedom, in the end there appears Divine order and truth. But Eve when she has her eye on the apple will have it—nor is Adam ever far behind. And a considerable number of energetic and thoughtful women have got their eye on this apple now,—the proof of their capacity to stand side by side with man on equal terms in all the social and political activities of life. The physical equality, or absence of disqualifying conditions, will, it is hoped, turn up in time. I think that the time has come for conceding to women every possible advantage which they can claim or desire in the way of education, in any sphere in which

they think they have a capacity to shine. I rejoice most heartily to see Mrs. Anderson and Miss Davies taking their full part in the discussions of the School Board. On the whole, probably Mrs. Anderson has contributed the wisest and most practical speeches to the debates. I regret greatly that the Board did not put Mrs. Anderson, then Miss Garrett, where her votes entitled her to be, in the chair at the first meeting. The thing has gone so far now, so many able and earnest women have adopted the principle so thoroughly, and so many more have a vague longing in the same direction which they hardly put into shape, that I am sure society will gain in the long run by letting the experiment be fairly tried to the utmost point of the hopes of its advocates. The result probably will be that a few women of large capacity for large affairs will add a most valuable reinforcement to the intelligence and energy of the men to whom the custom of ages has confided the charge of all great public interests, except, strangely enough, the highest of all : the whole sex will be lifted by the stimulus applied, and the culture afforded, to a higher level of sympathy with man and man's work, from which the men will reap an advantage at any rate commensurate with the gain of the women ; while the great multitude of the wives

and mothers of the world will learn to understand with new clearness, with new reverence, the essential sacredness of their womanly vocation, and will devote themselves with fresh earnestness to the work and the ministry which they, and they only, can offer to the world. Some such result seems looming in the distance as the fruit of all this present agitation and strife; which may be regarded as an indisputable sign that some radical improvement in the culture and the function of womanhood is demanded by the native faculty of the sex, and by the exigencies of the times in which we are living; however unnatural and impracticable may be the schemes which are formulated by those who lead the agitation, and clamour loudly for a kind of equality, for the maintenance of which we should be bound to say they are cruelly incapacitated, could we believe that it was meant for them by the ordinance of God. Some few thoughts on what may be their highest duty in life, and how they may work at it, I would gladly submit to any young girls in training for life's duties, into whose hands these pages may fall.

I. It belongs mainly to the women to keep alive on the world's hearth the sacred fire. The earthly fire the men will look to: remember, young girls, it is yours specially to look to the Divine. The

German races, as you know, were from the very first distinguished by a kind of religious reverence for woman. They believed that there was a sacred element in her composure which made her, in a measure which man as man with difficulty and rarely attains to, the mouthpiece of the gods. The classical nations were not without some glimpses of the same great truth. A woman was regarded as the organ of the Divinity in their most noted oracle; and women, virgin women, were trusted with the guardianship of the sacred fire on the hearth of Vesta at Rome. But it is in the Bible that womanhood appears in all its essential dignity and grace; and that from the first page of the revelation. The Bible knows nothing of the base origin of marriage. Far back as it carries the history of the race, it reveals the woman in noble equality with man. The first chapters of St. Luke open the record which woman has written for herself in the history of Christendom. The springs of that homage, that worship of woman, which was the distinctive feature of the age of chivalry, and which the worship of the Virgin simply transposed into the theological key, are there in the earliest chapters of Christian history.

Nothing lovelier, nothing more instinct with essential grace, than the Virgin's history has ever

bloomed into beauty in this wilderness world. The lily is an emblem constantly associated with her name. As the lily gleams pale and fair, with something of spiritual beauty, through the gathering shades of evening, that woman's life gleams spirit-like through the shadows which brood over the life of our world. Fragrant as the breath of the lily, there floats through all the ages the odour of her life. Nor was it her private and peculiar grace. Mary of Bethany, Mary of Magdala, Dorcas, and Lydia belong to the same pure company. The women could not be omitted in the enumeration of the members of the infant Church (Acts i. 14). They have won for themselves a holy and beautiful shrine which is all their own, the holiest and the loveliest in the temple of the sacred history of the world. As plain matter of fact we learn from the Gospels that they understood the Saviour's teaching more deeply than the Apostles. They ministered to Him with more constant fidelity; their love was not daunted by His apprehension, nor chilled by His death. They had taken into their hearts the prophecy of His resurrection, and shrined it there. The mystery was a sacred hope to them, which kept them watching by His tomb. To the man's understanding that hope of humanity was a dream which death

had frustrated (Luke xxiv. 21); and when the women had clasped the fact, had seen the risen man, and ran to proclaim Him, to the men "*their words seemed as idle tales, and they believed them not*" (Luke xxiv. 11). It was a woman, too, who saw all the great hope for humanity which Paul's Gospel opened (Acts xvi. 13, 14); it was through woman's capacity to receive and cherish the higher truths, the truths which descend from the celestial sphere, that the Gospel entered Europe, and all the higher stir and movement of the world's life began.

And there can be no question, we imagine, that woman's nature is specially open to the demonstration of the spirit. She has an open eye for the holy light in which great truths come shrined, and which is their celestial witness. The intellectual part of reason may be stronger in the man's brain; but the apprehensive, the intuitive, the spiritual part is stronger in the woman's; and one of her noblest, grandest functions is to keep alive on earth, through all the dust and din and smoke of life's battle, the knowledge of Divine, celestial things. I know that many would regard this as simply synonymous with the proposition, "Woman is credulous." Yes! credulous of God and heaven. It is a poor philosophy, cold and deadly, which

resolves into credulity the firm grasp by which man holds to all that makes this life worth the living, and this earth of ours anything other than a den of selfish, passionate, murderous brutes. Faith man must have ; faith in something outside his visible sphere. The barest Positivist believes something which is beyond the range of demonstration according to his system ; and when we see the miserable superstitions into which the men who boast of confining themselves to the demonstrable are constantly falling, we will not reserve the word credulity for the beliefs which inspire, elevate, quicken, and save mankind.

And these truths, women ! are your sacred deposit. The evidence of them is laid up most richly and surely in your hearts. You have to nurse for the two worlds. Men may grasp these truths, contend for them, prove them, suffer for them, die for them ; but that kind of realizing hold of them which makes them the holy light of our common pathways, the pure inspiration of our daily duties, is commoner with you than with men. It is more in your way to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen, drinking in the lore of unseen, eternal worlds. "*Mary sat still in the house alone.*" It is more possible for women, more in the way of the work which God has given them to do, to sit and

meditate, to suffer and cling. Many a holy meditation passes through a pious woman's musing mind, as the fingers ply their busy tasks, or the eyes keep watch by the bed of pain or death. She has time, quiet time, to think, feel, and aspire. And her nature tends instinctively to the higher reliance. Her eyes are naturally up unto the hills from whence cometh her help. She is in the way of hearing voices which rarely lift themselves amid the storm of worldly war in the field where men do battle; and she readily lays such fast hold on the unseen realities that, like the angel of Peniel, they *must* stay till they have blessed our lives.

How many men are there in the world who would confess, as I do with profound thankfulness, that a woman's noble, patient, trustful life has been the purest and strongest help that Heaven has sent to them, in their efforts to see the invisible, to grasp the impalpable, to realize the eternal, and to keep Christ in sight as their guide and captain in fighting the hard battle of their daily lives.

Women! this is what heaven and this age is demanding of you. You find life dull, home narrow, domestic activity mean and poor! I do not wonder at it. It seems poor and dead enough to me as some of you contrive to make it. But suppose that you try to take heaven into it. Go

pray. Pour out your hearts unto the Lord. Fill the vessels of your lamps with the oil of prayer, aspiration, and Divine communion. Set yourselves to work on the garden of your own natures; root out the weeds with stern resolution; till the ground by holy meditation, reading, and prayer; let the flowers grow fair and strong in the air and the dew of heaven,—flowers of purity, gentleness, patience, industry, order, grace, and charity. Work hard at self-culture, as your precious, priceless contribution to the life of your homes, your country, your world. Let world-weary men, when they come home, come into an atmosphere which some purer, serener sphere has tempered. Make them feel how good and beautiful are the holy, heavenly things which the world and the devil tempt them to scoff at as they push through the selfish throng. Train yourselves to reinforce all the higher and holier elements of their nature, which get no culture in the world such as you can offer to them; and brace yourselves, not to frown down, but to look down with a glance of heavenly trust and hope, the hard, narrow, selfish, mercenary views of things which men inevitably contract in the busy life of such an age as this. In a word, pray, think, strive to make a home something like a bright, serene, restful, joyful nook of heaven in an unheavenly

world; and then I venture to prophesy we shall hear little moaning over the poverty, monotony, and dulness of a woman's life in a world the deepest springs of whose life obey her hand.

II. Your charge, further, is the dignity, brightness, and honesty of the home-life of our times.

DIGNITY.—Economy—the ruling of a house—is goodly, noble, and most fruitful work. We have almost lost the mediæval belief about the beautiful aspect of a well-ordered home. Women, noble, cultivated, and even highly learned women, had in the old time the same pride in it which an author has in his book, an artist in his picture, a statesman in the policy which orders the larger home of a country or of a world. The smallest duties were made matters of study; the kitchen, the glass room, the dairy, the linen closet, all betrayed the touch of a wise, deft, and cultivated hand. Time did not hang heavily on their hands, though there were no papers and magazines, as it does on the hands of our modern girls. See to the dignity of the domestic order. Let everything in the home bear the trace, not of servile, but of womanly work. Dignify the domestic details by giving thought to them. It is thought, wise thought, which dignifies and ennobles things. Make order, sweetness, purity, pleasantness in the home sphere,

and you will dignify as well as gladden your life. A girl with a daily service which is to bring order out of disorder, cosmos out of chaos, has no need to look with envy on the busiest life. She is training faculties which will make order one day in a wider world.

I pity from my heart the girl to whom the home-life and the home-work is hateful ; whose one desire and prayer is to escape from it ; whose life is a perpetual thirst for excitement ; who dangles herself before the eyes of men as a glittering prize which they must snatch to win. There is no escape for such an one from pain and weariness ; life for her will be one long discontented moan ; and death will but usher out a useless soul into a hopeless eternity. Dignify the life of the home, I again say, by womanly work for it ; fill it with the traces of the loving thought and care of a pure and cultivated nature ; sit as a queen in a well-ordered, well-governed world. There are two ideal portraits painted out at full length in the Scripture. The one is the portrait of a patriarch in his tribe ; the other is the portrait of a woman in her home. Let us read the last. "Who can find a virtuous woman ? "for her price is far above rubies. The heart of "her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he "shall have no need of spoil. She will do him

“good, and not evil, all the days of her life. She
“seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly
“with her hands. She is like the merchants’ ships,
“she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also
“while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her
“household, and a portion to her maidens. She
“considereth a field, and buyeth it : with the fruit
“of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She gird-
“eth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her
“arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is
“good : her candle goeth not out by night. She
“layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands
“hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to
“the poor ; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to
“the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her
“household : for all her household are clothed with
“scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry ;
“her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is
“known in the gates, when he sitteth among the
“elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and
“sellet it ; and delivereth girdles unto the mer-
“chant. Strength and honour are her clothing ;
“and she shall rejoice in time to come. She open-
“eth her mouth with wisdom ; and in her tongue
“is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the
“ways of her household, and eateth not the bread
“of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her

"blessed ; her husband also, and he praiseth her. "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou "excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and "beauty is vain : but a woman that feareth the " Lord she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit "of her hands ; and let her own works praise her in "the gates."—Proverbs xxxi. 10—31.

Few more beautiful things out of heaven than such a kingdom, with such a woman for its queen !

BRIGHTNESS.—There are few sadder things in our times than the dulness and wretchedness of the homes of our poor. Nine-tenths of the drinking in bright, warm, gay taverns and gin palaces comes from this source. It is cheerfulness and fellowship which men seek, and not the mere exhilaration of drink. And there is a moral dulness and squalor, quite as ghastly, to be seen constantly in rich and cultivated homes. It drives the men out for a little society and cheerfulness, and lays the foundation of habits which end in many a terrible wreck. Remember, you girls and mothers, the brightness of the home is your charge. You sweep up the hearth mechanically when the hour of the husband's, the brother's, return draws near. Sweep out too the dust and the grit of the day's work and care, the cobwebs of domestic industry, the spent ashes of evil tempers and contentions—sweep

them out. Have the face, the eye, the brow, the heart, clear and smiling as the hearth ; and remember that while the men are responsible for winning the bread, you are responsible for the beauty and brightness of the home. Cultivate your faculties sedulously, and perfect your accomplishments. Let the men of your households find nowhere such good, bright, enjoyable society as by your fireside. And if things go wrong—and they cannot go long without frets and jars in such a world as this—be you the one to recover most swiftly, and set things right again by a wise, kindly, and patient word. Make your home, in a word, the scene of your constant, patient, and cheerful duty. Sing to your home tasks ; they are truly musical. Home is a fairer and goodlier field to work in than the noisy, dusty, storm-vexed field of battle in which so many of us have to spend our weary days.

HONESTY.—Young friends, above all have done with shams. Let the home-life, and all over which you rule, be honest. Let all that shows be real. There is a vain and sinful show in which the world loves to walk at present, which fills us with dreary apprehension as to the form in which the shattering shock will come to tear our hypocrisies to tatters, and set us sternly face to face with realities once more. That it is coming, that it must come, none

can question, I think, who look with keen eye on the signs of these times, and who read aright the lessons of history. And the chief leaders in the vain show are our young maidens, the wives and the mothers of our future. False hair, false figure, false height, false dress,—so much that is false, that sensible people ask themselves how much is there that is real beneath. And it runs through the whole scale. There is much that is ominously like the luxury of the first age of the Roman Empire in the luxury of our times. The frightful head-dresses of our women may find their originals in the busts of the empresses and courtesans who made that the most infamous age of the world's history. We have fallen into the basest habit, short of open vice, into which a society can fall; we surround ourselves in our daily lives with things which it is understood on all hands are simply for show, and not for use or delight. I was at a fruiterer's the other day buying a modest modicum of fruit. I saw a remarkable basket of pears in the window. I was curious enough to ask the price. "£12 12s. the dozen," was the answer. "And who is fool enough to buy them?" "Oh, we do not sell them, we let them out." This, I thought to myself, caps the whole! The very fruit on what looks like a hospitable table a cheat! And there

is something radically vicious—yes, and dangerous—in the condition of a people which loves to have it thus. We are full of pious reflections on the judgment which has fallen on Paris. Precisely the same mind is in us ; though, thank God, there are noble restraining influences at work. And such judgment as has fallen on Paris is inevitably our doom, if we cannot apply the tonic of simplicity, sobriety, and honesty to our lives. It rests with you, young people, mainly. Be real, at any rate. Hate shows of all sorts that have no commensurate substance behind them ; and let your homes have honest reality legible everywhere. Let all the surroundings and belongings of your being ring true to the hammer-strokes with which a stern critic is ever testing our lives.

III. With you rests largely the accomplishment of Christ's compassionate ministry to the world. You find woman's life dull, do you, on the whole ; and her work poor ? Well ! there falls to her share in the distribution of functions and vocations the main part of that ministry which occupied the whole life, every thought, every moment, of the incarnate Son of God. We have hardly yet mastered the rudiments of woman's work as the saviour of society. There is a weary waste in all our social and political organization. But in nothing is it so glaring,

so disastrous, as in the blundering efforts we make to tend our sick, our ignorant, our poor; while heaven's own nurses, heaven's own teachers, heaven's own almoners, are among us by myriads, crying out and pining for work. The days are not far distant when the whole of our hospital work, and a large share of the visitation and relief of our poor, with the teaching of our troops of young children, will be handed over bodily to competent and cultivated women; who will feel that it is their distinguished vocation to serve the State in these spheres of its ministry, as it is the statesman's to serve it in council, and the soldier's in war.

The truth is that the wounds and the sicknesses of our modern society, wounds which gape more widely, sicknesses which press more fatally, year by year, suffer cruelly from our clumsy handling. We are not yet on the track of a Christian treatment of the sorrows and sicknesses of society, because we never get the woman's hand upon them. They need a firmer and tenderer touch than ours, and till we have organized this great army of women crying out for work, and sent them forth to heal, to teach, to purify, to save, poverty will grow upon us, ignorance will grow upon us, vice will grow upon us; and we shall leave the world to struggle, as it is struggling now, with the dark

doubt, whether Christianity is still laden with any benediction for mankind. We want our angels of mercy, of purity, of wisdom, abroad among our outcasts. We have not to ascend into heaven to fetch them ; if we know how to draw out their ministry, they are here.

Woman ! recognize your work, and train for it. Christ's ministry is yours. The shop, the warehouse, the halls of justice or of State, knew little of His footsteps. He was, where He calls you to be, in quiet homes, and about the streets, the lanes, the alleys, among the poor. Draw near to Him, live near to Him, that your womanhood may unfold its fair, its divine proportions. Womanhood grows more Christlike than manhood when it bears the burden of this ministry. Learn sympathy with His spirit whose every movement was compassion, who never passed along the world's highway without a benediction for the sick, the sad, the poor. Know that to fulfil Christ's ministry is the part which has been ordained for you before God and before the angels ; to help Him still, as the women helped Him of old, in His kingdom ; and then, when your work is done, to be with Him where He is ; to behold the beauty, to taste the joy, to delight in the blessedness, of the realm which you helped to win for Him, through all the ages of eternity.

OUR ELDERS.

ONCE, in the far north, far within the Arctic circle, saw the dawn and the sunset in the same sky. I think it was the sublimest scene which I have ever looked upon. I have seen some, at any rate, of the fairest and most wonderful sights of this beautiful world ; but the midnight sun has a glory and a mystery all its own. There was a pile of splendid clouds in the far north, with the sunset glow upon them, flushing, as the sunset faded, into the rosy radiance of dawn ; and beneath a wild, foaming, moaning sea. We were crossing the West fiord, a broad, stormy arm of the ocean, far up on the Norwegian coast. It separates the mainland from the Lofoden islands, a long chain of sharp, lofty, graceful peaks shooting up out of the bosom of the waters clear into the upper heaven. The West fiord is some thirty miles in width where we crossed it. Behind lay the dark, rugged, melancholy

coast of the mainland, with its long low break-water of grey rock in front ; while inland the sharp mountain peaks pierced the clouds ; their slopes draped with snow-wreaths veined here and there with blue streaks of glacier ice. The clear, dry air lends a wonderful enchantment and a certain solemnity to the scenery. Distant mountain ranges, twenty, thirty miles away, are as sharp and clear as the near line of cliffs that drop in sheer bold precipices into the sea. The very lights and shadows on the distant mountains, the purple tints in their hollows, are seen in the shining air with startling clearness ; and this, together with the stillness, the savageness, the loneliness, lends a solemn touch to the Arctic scenery, which is to be found nowhere else, I imagine, in the world.

Leaving this wild, solemn coast behind us, we stretched forth over the wild waters of the West fiord. Soon a long line of sharp, jagged peaks, stretching southwards and northwards far as the eye could reach, became visible on the far horizon. They were wild, keen, serried, as a row of shark's teeth ; or as the rocks which some of you may have seen as you run into the Channel Islands in the light of dawn. As you advance, they tower high above the sea-line, and group themselves into islands ; a vast line of gigantic needles shooting up

in all sorts of fantastic forms, some hundreds of feet into the air ; and beyond them in the far north, casting on them a strange, wild glow, was the midnight sun. The midnight was approaching as we moved out over the fiord ; it was as light as at mid-day, but with something of the cold weird light of an eclipse. The sun itself was not visible. Splendid masses of white cumulus filled the northern sky. Behind them the sun was just touching the water line, and rising again on a new day. It was like looking over the edge of the world. Nothing that I have ever seen, or I suppose am ever likely to see, can compare with it in sublimity. The northern clouds were piled in great masses, through whose interstices the sunlight streamed. They were tinted with the rose-glow like the Alps at sunset and sunrise. But what chiefly struck me, and filled me with wonder and something like awe, was the clear difference in the tint of the rose-glow on the clouds east and west of the point behind which lay the midnight sun. How it was I know not, but there it was full clearly. On the clouds a little to the west was the rich, deep, ruddy glow of sunset ; while stealing up the white slopes of the eastern clouds was the delicate rosy radiance of the dawn. Moment by moment the deep-toned western glory faded. It seemed laden with the breath of the day's

conflicts, and the dust of its toils. But as it faded in the west, the rosy light in the east brightened, pure and clear as the dew of the morning, full of young, glad light and love. In time the dawning light deepened ; the western glory, the light of the dying day, quite faded, and the splendour of a new morning burst upon the world. I shall never lose the impression of that midnight morning. Nature is full of symbols to those whose eye and heart cares to search for them ; but I thought I had rarely seen such a full, rich symbol as this. Evening brightening into morning, with no night between them. The light of yesterday fading as the light of the morrow brightened in the sky. Thus I thought a good old man should die, nay, should not see death ; the golden glory of the evening as it fades flushing into the radiance of the eternal day.

I believe that this presents to us the true, the Christian aspect of death to the aged. The sun of their life should know no setting ; just touching the world of shadows, no more, then rising again to shine on for ever. Death to the young, or to men and women in the prime of life, partakes inevitably more or less of the nature of a catastrophe ; and it reminds us sharply that we live in a jangled, disordered world. It is a dislocation of the natural order. It is a calamity which reveals the presence and the

power of sin. It rends heartstrings rudely asunder; it leaves them torn, bleeding and trailing in the dust. It rarely fails to leave want and misery behind it. Cheerless homes, lonely hearts, the fatherless, the widow, business wrecked, hopes withered, a career of promise cut short in its prime, sad souls mourning, and struggling with the question, Why hath the merciful Father permitted this? "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my dear one had not died." But with the death of the aged, who have lived out their life, fought their fight, done their work, and are ready to lay down the shield and sword which their failing strength can wield no longer, all this is changed. They ought to teach us what it is that heaven means by death. To them it comes as natural as the autumn mists when the fields are reaped and the harvest is garnered, veiling the earth where nature is busy preparing the advent of glorious spring. To them it comes distinctly as the next, the inevitable stage of development. Without death, life would be a horrible torment, an interminable regret, unlit by one ray of hope. To the aged, as the powers decay, as the spring of life dies down, as the beat of the heart gets faint, and the currents run coldly through the veins, death appears as a deliverer. In spite of the shrinking of the spirit, the weary body, the tired brain and heart, watch

for his advent with longing, and lie down to rest as gladly as the tired child nestles in the mother's bosom in the young, joyous springtime, when rest and play complete the circuit of the hours. There is a touching and powerful picture of a weary old age drawn in the Scripture—and of what great human experience is there not somewhere a powerful picture in the Bible?—which we will study. It is the key of the thoughts to which I wish to direct your attention now. “Remember now thy Creator
“in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come
“not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt
“say, I have no pleasure in them ; while the sun,
“or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not
“darkened; nor the clouds return after the rain :
“in the day when the keepers of the house shall
“tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves,
“and the grinders cease because they are few, and
“those that look out of the windows be darkened,
“and the doors shall be shut in the streets, when
“the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise
“up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters
“of music shall be brought low : Also when they
“shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears
“shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall
“flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden,
“and desire shall fail : because man goeth to his

"long home, and the mourners go about the streets :
"or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden
"bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the
"fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then
"shall the dust return to the earth as it was ; and
"the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.
"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher : all is
"vanity " (Ecclesiastes xii. 1—8).

All this experience, growing weakness, growing dimness, growing dulness, growing faintness, growing pain, growing darkness, has to be faced by those who live out their mortal span. The decay of everything which has made the outward interest and joy of life is simply inevitable. The old familiar pursuits have, one by one, to be abandoned. The old familiar places have, one by one, to be forsaken. Affairs which you have conducted, and the conduct of which has been the pride of your heart and the work of your life, must be handed over to others, and the sad feeling must steal over your spirit that your work in this world is done. What have you to look to but death ? It is your one hope. To hold on to the things of this life with feeble, faltering grasp, unable to hold them firmly, afraid to let them go, would be a slavish temper and attitude which would prey miserably on the spirit. No ! you must make a

pact with death, and keep it. In what spirit, in what attitude, with what hope? Shrinking, cringing, cowering, the victim of an irresistible fate, the captive of an all-victorious conqueror, a spectacle of pity to men and angels, beaten in life's battle, and led off unarmed, despoiled, to the prisons of the vanquished? Or with brave welcome, with open arms, with royal entertainment, as men of old received their angels; as the sunset glows with splendour which prophesies the yet more glorious dawning; as autumn dresses itself in hues of matchless beauty to meet the chilling blights of winter, pregnant with prolific spring?

Old friends, fathers, mothers, whose heads are filled with the snows of age, whose brows are furrowed deep with the traces of life's cares and burdens, perhaps with the thorns of its crown, we look to you to teach us all that God means by death; all the benediction with which the Angel who guides our pilgrimage comes laden, when he advances to clasp our hand, to be to us a rod and a staff as we tread the threshold of the glooms that hang round the gates of the everlasting home. We look to see you with something of the brightness of that celestial home upon you. A gleam in the eyes, a tone in the look and bearing, which have been caught from long and close communion

with the things and the beings whose full vision awaits you there. No moaning, no sadness, no sorrowful back-look to the world which you are leaving, and where your place, to which you thought yourself so all-important, is already filled. Quiet—not rapturous it may be, that is given to but few, and those chiefly the martyr spirits, whose joy flashes out of a pain which would make most men mad—but quiet, serene, earnest, with eyes that seem to look through the veil, and to be growing familiar with the things that are visible there. I have seen that look in aged eyes, serene’y beautiful; loving, genial, cheering glances on all things around in this mortal pilgrimage; while the eagle gaze of the immortal is brightening, proclaiming that the hour of the Apocalypse, the unveiling, is coming fast, is come at last. Heaven’s dealings are very loving and gentle with the aged. There is the love and tenderness with which a genial and serene old age is surrounded. “Honour, love, obedience, troops of friends;” and young children clinging round their knees. Grandchildren are a wonderful institution, beautiful as wonderful. God has so ordered the course of our pilgrimage that as our children scatter, build themselves homes, and leave us bare, children’s children shall gather round us, and glad young voices shall fill our homes. All

the joy with which young children fill a house shall return to us, with none of the care, none of the burden, none of the pain. Grandpapa and grandmama, if they have the true ripeness of age, have an honour, a dignity, in the home which no potentate on earth can mate. They may themselves be a care and a burden. The old patriarchs may be a little exacting, and sensitive to the least appearance of neglect; but it is a care which blesses young folks and honours them. Never is childhood so beautiful as in its ministry to age. It is a burden that trains our youth to bear the burden of life manfully, and prepares for them in turn an honoured and happy old age when at length their work is over, and their rest is won.

But this is not the work of nature. Man does not ripen naturally—that is, according to the course of his earthly nature—for eternity. He is the child of spiritual culture. By spiritual toil and effort only, by patience, by pain, by tears, can this crown of a goodly old age, "*the hoary head which is as a crown of glory*," be won. It comes at the end of a goodly life course, a course that has been aspiring and tending to God. It is the fruit of a continual renewing, the strengthening and unfolding of the inner man, which is not born of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of "*the*

word of God which liveth and abideth for ever," and "*which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" And that nature needs close and constant culture ; the weeds in its fields need to be cut down, and their very roots torn up, no matter what sensitive fibres may be lacerated in the process ; while the seeds of the kingdom, the germs which the good Sower has planted, have to be nurtured with many toils and tears, if in your old age you are to wear the look and bearing of a man whose harvest has been reaped and is ready for gathering home into the garners of eternity.

Suffer me to say a few words to you about this culture of your spirit, that you may be happy and honoured in the golden evening of your days. There are special qualities to be cultivated which prepare for old age, with its duties and ministries—duties and ministries which the patriarchs only can fulfil, and which this age most emphatically demands at their hands. And I shall speak in brief of three very ancient and venerable graces, which, while they should abound in us all, should over-abound in the aged, should flow over with a fulness which is fed from the infinite fulness of heaven. My friends, who have entered on a green old age, to whom God has given to see their children's children, and peace upon their Israel,

see that you abound in faith, in hope, and, above all, in charity.

I. FAITH.—And I do not deal with generals here. I mean something very definite, and with a very special direction. I do not say only, Have faith in the unseen realities and the unseen Angel of your pilgrimage; that is essential, without that the life will fail in its very springs. But, beyond that, cultivate a kind of faith which is rare in the aged, which they have many temptations to let slip, but which, if they can hold it fast, adds one of the most beautiful and genial charms to age—faith in the Angel who is leading on, not you only, but the young generation and the world. Nothing is so beautiful in age as a loving cordial recognition of the young age, its work, its aims, its hope; and nothing, let me add, is so rare. "*No doubt we are the men, and wisdom shall die with us,*" is the favourite formula of age. And it sows discord between the old age and the new, in which the old is sure to suffer. For the new age has the momentum, and will clear its path, let the aged moan, and groan, and shake their heads as they may. If they set themselves to cross it, they will inevitably be beaten. It will honour them and love them, and count their smile one of its chief delights, if they will faithfully and lovingly be-

lieve that it is advancing, on the whole, not towards hell, but towards heaven. I say faithfully. This tendency to groan over the spirit and aims of the young generation, which is the easily besetting sin of the old, is at root want of faith, not in man, but in God. It is the chronic struggle and sorrow of humanity, the struggle of the old and the new; suspicion on the one side, contempt on the other.

Each generation has to fight a battle, and a hard one. It has to get its foot firmly on the arena, with its new ideas, new views, new inspirations, new armour, new furniture for its work; and the elders who occupy the stage find its speech strange, almost barbarous. How fearfully bewildering must all the new doctrines of the scientific school sound to the man who has contented himself with holding the ground he had won by reading, thinking, and working twenty years ago! A man who, as he settles into old age, regards his opinions as finally fixed, and does not care to hear anything or to read anything which may modify them, is doing his very best to prepare for himself an ungenial, unhappy old age. Year by year he will find himself in a more unhomelike world. If he cares for anything going on around him, it will be to censure and to ban it; and he will bear, not a ripe and fruit-laden, but a dwarfed and barren nature with

him into eternity. Believe, dear old friends, I pray you, that the Spirit who in youth guided you some steps on beyond the boundary lines of your fathers, and who has led you thus far, is the Angel who is guiding us. Believe that though there is much to sorrow over, much to condemn, in the word and the work of each generation, yet, on the whole, while Christ leads humanity, a progress is inevitable. These new words, new ideas, new tendencies, mean something real, and will be fertile in blessing after they have been purified and perfected by suffering; and they will have suffered enough, have no fear about that. God is their parent, not the Adversary. They have respect to anxieties and difficulties which are looming in the distance, which the young see clearly, but which are hidden from your dimmer sight; and to work for God, which has to be done under other and it may be more perilous conditions, when you have passed up to reap the fruit of the work which you have done, on high.

Have faith, then, not in the young age, but in the God who creates the young age, and who sends it forth with the same promise with which He sent forth you. Say with old Jacob, as you look on the young life, with its strange, impetuous, imperious ways—not more impetuous and imperious than

once were yours,—“*The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads,*” bless the girls, and bless their work. Read their books. Try to understand lovingly and hopefully their aims. enlarge your hearts and understandings to take in the hope and the promise of their life, and your place will always be a happy and honoured one at their head. You will be able to tame their impetuosity and to moderate their excess, while you strengthen, stimulate, and consecrate their progress. You will be weaving with your aged hands the golden links which bind the generations here, as you pass up to be a band to join the earthly company to the general assembly and Church of the first-born which is gathering there.

II. HOPE.—We are saved by hope; “*a good hope through grace*” is ours, “*which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast, entering into that which is within the veil.*” We have a right to ask of our patriarchs that they shall justify and establish our hope by clear vision, as they draw near the veil, of the realities beyond. There is no sermon ever preached to a family, or in a family, like a Christian patriarch’s death-bed. It remains in the memories of children and grandchildren, a convincing argument for immortality. They ought to see it in your words and bearing. In you, as

the veils of sense grow thin, the justified, sanctified spirit ought to be seen, touched by the first glow of the coming glory ; some light in the eye, some glow on the cheek, that is lit from no earthly sun. Make the unseen world your home, and let the home-longing be manifest in your daily conversation. Let all around you see that for you death is destroyed by the hope of the future to which it is the entrance. Let the desire to depart and to be with Christ animate and irradiate your life. As the treasures of this world slip from your tremulous hand, let your eye and your heart dwell on the enduring and eternal substance which is laid up as your inheritance on high. Let none be tempted to think that death appears to you as a privation. Welcome the growing weakness and palsy of the powers, as the condition of their regeneration in the vigour of immortality. Believe that of everything which you are losing a fairer counterpart is awaiting you. Friends, kindred, don't feel that you are forsaking them ; you are but passing on before them for a moment to the home where all that is yours in Christ will be assembled at last. Let your whole attitude and aspect, as age whitens the hair and chills the blood, be that of an exile who has heard the summons, and will soon be in the home-land,

surrounded by all that he supremely loves. We want our elders to preach to us by their lives what the faith and the hope of a Christian are worth to a human spirit ; how much of the joy of heaven may be tasted this side the river ; how as the outer man decays the inner man may be growing to his glorious immortal prime. The whole experience of life, when that first glow and spring of youth are gone, which make the very sensation of life a bliss, is a daily dying. Tell us, elders ! fathers ! mothers ! tell us that you feel the glow and the spring returning, prophesy of a youth which will outlast eternity.

III. CHARITY.—There are some neighbourhoods in London where what they need chiefly is a hospital for the incurably rich. I have observed this very constantly in my experience of life, that when men have got very rich, and have retired to their luxurious homes, for all the higher purposes that a man was made for, their work is mainly done. It is the younger men, the men who are not rich, who are making their money by hard toil, who give most nobly in proportion to their means, and who give, too, time and labour, which is more precious to them than gold. By the time that a man who has set his heart on a large fortune has got it, in nine cases out of ten he has lost the power to use it

nobly, and to enjoy it truly. Soul and body become equally dyspeptic, and are more occupied with their symptoms, and with arrangements for their comfort, than in the work which, while it would cost them something both of money and care, would be a blessing to their own souls and to their fellow-men. I pray you, rich elders, whose course in this world has been prosperous, to recall the past, and say, do you give at this moment in proportion to your possessions, one half what you were wont to give when you were a young and perhaps a struggling man, thirty years ago?

I know the answer: I have a family to provide for, and I must leave them independent of the accident of my death. I believe firmly that there is no curse of a social kind so disastrous as the fortunes which men lay up for their sons and daughters, to buy them that advantage in their start in life which it would be to their advantage through eternity to conquer for themselves by brave toil and pain, by which it would be nobly instead of basely won. The best thing for us all is the steady, constant work of life, under the sharp spur of necessity. Something may be done wisely not to make it too sharp; but I am persuaded, for all that, that if accumulation of wealth were forbidden, and young souls were sent forth from the first to fight their

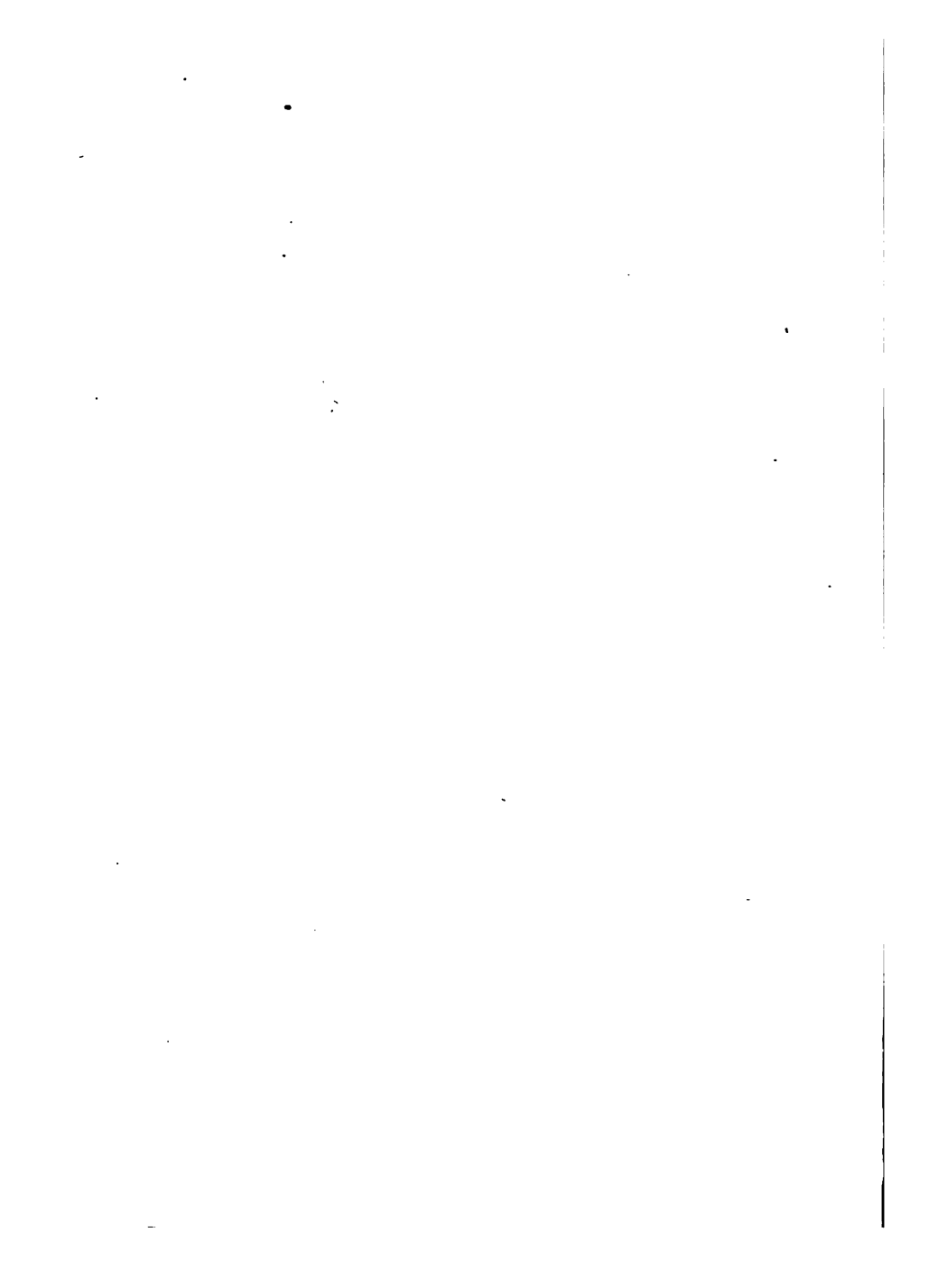
way, we should be amazed at the splendid wealth of human faculty which would be developed, and at the work which would be done in the world for man and for God.

But this is in Utopia at present. Yet we have a right to demand from our elders that they shall be our leaders in ministry; that they shall restore the tone of the decaying public spirit of our times. What we need to bring us to the level of our fathers is a revival of their beautiful belief in the virtue of charity, of large, earnest, provident charity, of gifts which may remain to bless the world when the giver is gone to his rest. The Romish Church took selfish possession of this charity, and made it the trading capital of her priests: and men have learned to hate it as a bribe to heaven, and have taught themselves to regard gifts with something like suspicion, as though they were the rivals, rather than the expressions, of the inner spiritual life. But they are none the less beautiful and blessed, none the less grateful to God and fruitful to man. And this is emphatically our elders' work. It should be theirs, as they draw out of the din and the dust of the arena, to watch for the means and the opportunities of serving mankind. They bring to the work wisdom, experience, influence, and possessions; it needs only a divine passion of

charity to make these effectual ministers of benediction to men. Aged hearts ought to overflow with it. They ought to be the stewards of society, for the comfort of its sorrowful, the help of its poor. There are offices of public trust in which the poor are interested, in which our elders, men and women, may find a noble field for the exercise of their mature and educated powers. And as their means abound, as the children marry and settle, and push their own way in life, they may make their wealth a source, not of selfish gratification, the limits of which, with the aged at any rate, are soon reached, but of immense and lasting benefits to the world.

We have hardly yet touched more than the edge of what a Christian organization of society can do to help and save mankind. Something of what may be possible when brotherhood means for all men what it meant for Christ and the disciples in the Apostolic Church, our elders might show to us by their large, wise, and courageous charity. We need, perhaps, supremely, courage. Courage to be original; the spirit that can conceive large enterprises for the public good, and the strength which can effect them. We have fallen into a rut of poor, common, rootless, fruitless almsgiving, which is as poor an imitation of Christian charity, as

foolish caressing is of the Divine love. In this, in everything, our prayer is for revival, new life, new fire. Lord, let these dry bones live! let them stand up, and breathe, and work, as in the old Pentecostal times! Fathers! mothers! pray for the renewing. Be our priests; lift up the aged arms and hearts to heaven, that a rushing tide of blessing may flow down on the poor, cold, and empty world.



BUYING AND SELLING AND GETTING
GAIN.



BUYING AND SELLING AND GETTING GAIN.

CHAPTER I.

TRADE : ITS ANCIENT AND ESSENTIAL DIGNITY.

FEUDALISM has left us many noble legacies and many base ones ; among the worst is the stigma it has put on trade. The foundation of feudal society was martial and aristocratic. Fighting power was the power which told most in Europe during the stormy ages in which national character and habits were forming ; and peaceful arts and industries grew up, not only under the shadow of, but almost in abject dependence upon, the one noble art and industry in the judgment of those times—the art and industry of war. In the southern countries of Europe, where the old civilisation of the Empire survived in force, and where the great towns continued to exercise a predominating influence, commerce occupied a much loftier position, and had its full honour as a mighty factor

in the culture and civilisation of mankind. Of Genoa, Pisa, Florence, and Venice, during the age of their splendour, it might have been said as of Tyre, "*her merchants were princes, and her traffickers the honourable of the earth.*"

But it was otherwise among us after the feudal era had fairly set in. In the earlier Anglo-Saxon times commerce had its dignity, and even its glory. King Alfred cherished it zealously. The merchant who had made three voyages took his place among the nobles. But the feudal institution drew everything into dependence on the lord in his stronghold. Many of our most flourishing commercial cities had their birth in a little knot of humble tradesmen, who built their homesteads around the castle gate, for the service of the feudal lord and his household, and for the protection of his shield. Little by little these communities grew strong by trade, and intelligent. They were able at length to treat on equal terms with the lord under whose shield they lived, and to extort charters, which in many cases became the basis of the municipal rights and privileges which our towns enjoy. But still throughout the era some stigma rested upon commerce; and it survives in a measure as a malignant influence to this day.

And yet it would be hard to specify one form of

human activity which has exercised an influence at once so wide-spread and so profound on the condition and progress of mankind. I will go further; it would be hard to indicate any form of human activity which has called forth and cultivated such noble and fruitful power. More human courage, strength, daring, constancy and genius, have been expended and nourished in commercial adventure and activity than in statesmanship or war. I say expended and nourished, for "scattering" and "increasing" in this region are one. In the early ages of man's culture the trader was the pioneer; the leader to new regions and distant shores. He opened up the world's pathways, and pierced its wildernesses. He faced its stormy seas and fearful oceans. He established intercourse with its barbarous peoples, and widened continually the realm of the civilised world; while he added to the life of civilised peoples their crowning ornament and grace. You traders belong to the oldest and most glorious line of adventurers. Without you the world would still be mainly wilderness, while the night of barbarism would lie deep and dark over all.

At this moment your hunters and trappers are exploring the trackless wastes of American, Asian, and African wildernesses. Where now the foot of

the solitary hunter treads, to collect the treasures which next year will pass through your hands and be the staple of your trade, before many years are past there will be thriving cities, schools, churches, and all the hum and the fire of social and political life. We none of us fairly measure the splendid daring, endurance, and intelligence of the chief leaders in the field of commercial enterprise in every age of the world ; but most especially when the world was young. We live under the blight of the feudal contempt for traffic, and we need to carry our appeal to the ancients, when "*merchants were princes, and traffickers the honourable of the earth.*" It was trade which first discovered these islands, and began the development of their riches. Traders first found courage to push out into the stormy Atlantic, and to establish a fruitful intercourse with our early forefathers, the traces of which survive to this day. It was commerce which sent forth Solomon's fleet on that grand voyage of circumnavigation, if circumnavigation it was. It was commerce which opened the Indies to European intercourse, which brought Russia within the realm of European civilisation, and which founded the widest and most splendid Empire which has ever been swayed by a single ruler, and which obeys the sceptre of our Queen. It drew out our sailors,

under Elizabeth, James, and Charles, North-west, in the most daring and splendid series of explorations ever undertaken by man. If England has an Iliad, it is the tale of those gallant and persistent enterprises to discover the North-west passage. Those who have not studied the records have not the faintest idea of the hardihood, the patience, the genius, which those enterprises elicited and consumed. And commerce—that noble thing which was then understood by trade—was their main inspiration. But for the merchants of England, and their far-reaching plans, we should never have even attempted to win the empire of the broad seas; the narrow seas were ours from the first.

English trade, in truth, has a brilliant and glorious history. Sad, dark, shameful passages enough there are; as in the records of every field of activity which has called forth the whole strength and passion of mankind. But still, on the whole, it is a noble and fruitful record, which an Englishman may read out with thankfulness and pride. So noble that it ought to make us bitterly ashamed of much that we are rather proud of, and think sharp business, in these eager and rapid days. Not that the former times were altogether better than these. Commerce, like Jacob, the father of a great

commercial race, is easily tempted into tricks and knaveries in all ages ; and the fond idea that the old times were distinguished by a purity, a simplicity and an honesty now "quite out of date," will not bear any close criticism. The stern laws in our statute-books and our municipal records against knavish practices, reveal plainly that the evils which we bemoan and find it so hard to cure, are about as old as commerce itself. But I think that in old times there was a healthier public judgment about it. Things were called by their right names, and dealt with in a strong-handed and imperative way. The traders who cheated the poor with short quantity or false quality, were pilloried, or their ears were nailed to their door-posts. Now, when they are caught, they are simply mulcted in a fine, which a few hours' clever knavery will replace. If ever the pillory is restored in England, it will be for such crimes as these. But these dark features loom against a background bright with industry, energy, courage, patience, intelligence, enterprise and conquest. Trade was manifestly, in the old time, a very glorious as well as fruitful part of the activity of the world. But now, is there not a hand-writing on the temple, for temple it was—Ichabod, the glory is departed? The most enthusiastic champions of commerce will own that, at any rate,

it has become sadly dim. But the essential nobleness is still in it. Trade also the Lord will redeem, and make His chosen instrument for the benediction of the world.

The first principle on which really rests the essential dignity of trade is this. Trade probably stands next to religion, among the agencies by which God is seeking to work out His great purposes in the constitution and the government of the world. The key-thought in the constitution of all things on earth and in heaven is ministry. It runs through the whole sphere; from the dust with which the March winds bed softly the seeds which are springing, to the life which perfectly manifested the Divine idea, wherein "*the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.*" Commerce is in the lower sphere what religion, with all its associated intellectual and spiritual activities, is in the higher sphere, man's ministry to man. It is the lower half of that sphere of ministry, which is the core of the religious idea; did we but understand it, and honour it as God meant it to be honoured. Strange as it may seem to us, there was something sacred in the calling of a merchant recognized among primitive peoples and in primitive ages of the world. It is full of interest to

notice that Tyre is spoken of in the same strain, as if something sacred attached to her, in the splendid passages of Ezekiel xxviii. 3—17.

God has made man far more dependent on his brother man than any other creature in the creation is dependent on its kindred. The whole bent of his nature presses him towards a development, which throws him on the ministry of his fellow-man for the fair unfolding of his life. Man isolated and solitary gets unmanned, while, when he is drawn into fellowship with his brethren, his life, rising in the scale of its aims and needs, makes continually larger demands on mankind. It would startle you to realize at this moment how many peoples, in all conceivable conditions and stages of culture and civilisation, are busy for you, supplying the indispensable surroundings of your life. And God meant this. It lies distinctly in His scheme of human life and development. We say that man was made for civilisation. What does civilisation mean?

Perhaps there is no word which is more variously defined by different writers. Is it not simply the development of the mutual relations of men? Those peoples are, on the whole, most civilised which have the most manifold relations, which touch their fellow-men, so to speak, at the most

numerous points, make most demands on them, need most from them, and give most to them in return. The essential thing in life is circulation. That life is the most vivid and powerful which exchanges gifts and influences most swiftly and constantly, which assimilates most, and gives forth most. Our physical life is higher than that of the animals, because it needs more and more varied conditions for its development, demands more manifold nourishment, and gives forth richer and more diverse products. In other words, the universe has more free circulation through it, as George Herbert divines in that wonderful poem on man; it bestows more upon it, and gets more from it in return.

And the life of societies which we call civilisation obeys the same law. The highest societies are not the most self-contained and independent; but those which communicate most, and are most dependent on the ministry of others, drawing them forth by the vital suction of their own vivid and energetic life. God meant man to learn more and more continually of his need of the ministries of other men for the completion of his life. He meant to bind the tribes and the nations together in a sweet interchange of gifts and influences, man leaning on man, people on people, continent on continent,

each increasing the other's store, and gaining in return increase of its own.

The Free Traders were not so far wrong in their dream of a millennium of industry and trade. They erred because they believed that mere interest would be the beating heart of it, instead of that which lies nearer than selfishness to the root of the life of commerce—the fulfilment in this lower region of the beneficent purpose of God, man's ministry to his fellow-man. Commerce has failed signally in her peaceful and benign ministry, because her activity has been degraded into a selfish scramble for profit. She will never comprehend, and will never approach the fulfilment of, her true position, until she understands that she holds a commission from God to minister to the brotherly intercourse, and to cement the brotherly relations, of men. All this may sound very Utopian—mere rhetoric—no more. If we, the classes which now have the management of the world's affairs, persist in regarding such ideas as Utopian, and such aims as hopeless, the matter will simply be taken out of our hands. The leaders of the working class have much deeper and much nobler ideas of the true function of trade than we embody in our economics; and if we cannot receive them, we shall simply be compelled to transfer the leadership to

those who will. There is something marvellous—transcendently marvellous—in the vast network of beautiful industries with which the wide world, savage and civilised, is covered; industries which commerce first created and still sustains. Chinese, Japanese, Malays, Arabs, Hindoos, Egyptians, Syrians, Tartars, Turks, Russians, Greeks, Germans, Italians, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Americans, Papuans, Negroes, Indians, Kaffirs, Moors, are at this moment at work for us. Things that will nourish, adorn, or heal our life are at this moment growing to shape under their deft fingers; while daily, as you traders go down to your banks, warehouses, and shops, you are setting industries in motion which will place things that will adorn and enrich their lives easily within their reach. It is a glorious, a beautiful ministry, if we could keep out of it the touch of the devil's accursed finger; a ministry over which ministering spirits on high might rejoice, and on which the Lord might again drop the dew of His benediction, "Behold, it is very good."

We have here in the lower form what Pentecost promised in the higher form—a universal language of humanity; the common human need, man's need of his brother, everywhere expressing itself, and everywhere drawing forth prompt and ample

responses from the sympathetic activities of mankind. We too little estimate, we too little reverence, this mighty ministry of which commerce is the energetic, intelligent, and effectual agent. If heart did but meet heart through the wide world, if mind met mind, if soul met soul, as hand meets hand in commerce, the prayer and the hope of Christ would be near their fulfilment, and the world would be "not far from the kingdom of God."

The second principle is that the original and fundamental idea of commerce was ministry, and not gain.

Whatever conclusion may be arrived at ultimately as to the origin of our race, quite clearly the tribe is the rudimental political society. The tribe is but the family on a larger scale, and the family idea rules all the apparatus of its life. Trade was originally barter for mutual benefit; and in its earliest form it was carried on between members of the same tribe, that is, really of the same household, and under conditions fixed by the head of the household, that is, the tribe, with a view, not to the good of the trader primarily, but of the whole community. The trader in a particular art or industry was regarded as the servant of the community for its good. He was to live by his calling, but the

supreme concern was that he should so exercise it as to contribute his share to the common weal. It is said by a very masterly writer on the subject, that a fossil record, so to speak, of this early idea of trade exists in the notion that there is a fair price for a thing, which is something different from the price that can be got for it. This means that men are brethren, and are bound to deal with each other as brethren, the private advantage of the seller being subject to lawful limitation from the private convenience of the buyer as well. This is what is implied in what is called a fair price, and it looks back to a time when price was fixed by superior authority for the common good.

Do not think that I am touching on these economic matters for the sake of the economics. I know so little about economic science that I have hardly the right to speak of it at all. But my interest in it rests on deeper grounds. I want you to see how this idea of trade sets forth in a lower form the Christian ideas which rule in the organization of the Church. This is precisely what God demands, on spiritual grounds, from the avowed subjects of His kingdom, Jewish and Christian. In the Church the members are to have care of each other (1 Cor. xii.), bearing each other's burdens, seeking each other's welfare, and so fulfilling the

law of Christ. When you trace trade to its origin, you find the same lofty idea, the member's ministry to his fellow-member, ruling in its realm. It is very wonderful to me, very beautiful, to see how great spiritual ideas repeat themselves in different forms, on the different levels of life, like the types of organization in the material sphere; and how, did we but understand it, this, the most mechanical and mercenary of all the activities which largely occupy man's energies and interests, has spiritual kindred with the highest and holiest, and has to do with Christian self-devotion, the ministries of angels, and the life of God's kingdom on high.

Commerce is the means by which man may help his brother on the levels of this world, may enlarge, enrich, and complete his life. Its fundamental idea is giving him something which he needs, and taking something needful which he can supply in return. It is not originally a means by which the seller can get a living, no matter what becomes of the buyer, but an arrangement by which each equally profits, the basis of which must be loyal confidence between man and man. The principle so popular in our commerce, and recognized in our law, *caveat emptor*, let the buyer look to it, does not belong to the fundamental principle of trade. It was rather the duty of the paternal head of the community to

look to it, in the interest of both parties, but still more in the interest of the whole. The business of the world has quite outgrown this paternal intervention; but something of it still survives, and might with profit have large extension, in the care exercised by a thoughtful government over traders, in the interests of the poor.

The business of the world has quite outgrown, as I have said, this paternal authoritative supervision. Indeed, the world altogether seems quite to have outgrown it. The confusion of our times is due largely to the fact that men cannot tell what can be substituted in its room. The application of the rules of the primitive to our competitive commerce could be fruitful only in confusion. Yet unless we can retain and apply something of its spirit, its central idea, the confusion will be more deadly still. But we must recognize that the time for this organization of commerce has gone by. Society cannot return on its tracks, let the social reformers, philanthropic or communistic, dream their dream as they may. Earnest God-fearing men, seeing the terrible evils of our trade, dream that they can meet them by new schemes and arrangements, by the reorganization of society, legal supervision, guild authority, and the rest. The communist, I need not remind you, would restore in its very

hardest and least father-like form this paternal authority of the State. But his idea of the reconstruction of society has a moral basis and aim of a kind. He is not content to let trade be just the field of battle of the bulls and the bears ; and hence his formidable power. But whatever form the dream may take, it is a dream still. A beautiful, but useless dream with some ; it may become a very ghastly and bloody dream in the hands of others ; but humanity has passed beyond its power to aid.

But then, as these noble moral ideas, and the elevating sense of moral relations, die, with the advance of material civilisation, out of the intercourse and activity of men, they must re-enter in some higher form, or society must become a wreck. And there is but one thing which can replace them. You cannot set up a new and grander earthly father, with larger powers and more absolute authority, like the communistic idea of the State, and bid him make such order as the primitive patriarch made in his tribe, in this larger world. Here is where all schemes of social reformation go to wreck. There is but one fatherly rule which can help us here ; there is but one authority which can take charge of the commerce and the manifold activity of such an age as this ; the Scrip-

ture calls it the Kingdom of Heaven. Unless those beliefs about man's duty to man in these lower realms of life, which seem entirely to have died out of our business, can be restored on the basis laid down in the Gospel, "*One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren,*" trade must, for want of the inspiration which once animated it, settle steadily down into a mere *mêlée* of selfish interests and brutal passions, which will make earth's fairest fields, as it has already made the slums of our great cities and the hunting grounds of savage and helpless races, wide wastes of misery and death.

And this leads us to the third principle on which it is important to insist: That the restoration of this sense of a brotherly duty between buyer and seller, as brethren in the same household and under the same fatherly rule, alone can raise commerce to its true dignity and honour, and make it what God meant it to be, the handmaid of the Gospel in the education of the world. This may sound very vague, very unpractical; but we cannot read our New Testaments without seeing that this is the one Divine plan for reforming the commerce as well as the politics and the morals of mankind. Understand that to give a man what he wants, be it a spade, be it a coat, be it a means of transit, and to

receive an equivalent for your own need, is an essentially noble and honourable thing. It is part, and a very deep part, of God's counsel about the government and progress of mankind. You are helping Him to work out His plans, by helping your brother to what he needs. You are adding your share, by your creative skill, to the wealth and the worth of His universe. You are doing your work, which is also His work, if you have put your strength into it, as fairly and nobly as the angels, and may win a "well-done" as emphatic as that which welcomes an apostle to his rest or a martyr to his crown. But give him a spade that will break in his hands, a coat that will split on his back, a carriage or a ship which will drop him on the way, and it is really an act of family treason ; you are betraying a brother, who, if he has any right at all with regard to you, has the right to trust you, and to believe that in your dealings you are not unmindful of his honest satisfaction, as well as of your own private good. It is simply wronging God in the lower hemisphere of life, as Ananias wronged Him in the higher. It is frustrating His counsel about the culture of humanity, and making impossible, as far as you can hinder it, His good government of the world.

I want you, young men of business, to feel that

you have a noble instrument in hand in this commerce, this power of creating and distributing things which enlarge, enrich, and beautify life; and I want you to use it nobly. Take your higher joy in what is highest in trade; find a purer pleasure in the thought of the sound, good, beautiful work that you have called into being, and distributed to those who will rejoice in it, than in the gain that flows from it, which is your righteous and well-earned pay. I want you to rise to the height of the traditions of your craft or calling. This stigma on trade, as compared with professional life, is really quite a modern matter. The noblest and the wisest men in England were traders in the days of Elizabeth; and the queen herself had her ventures, though perhaps it will not do to look at them too closely by the light of international law. But the trade with the new regions which the discoverers, in pursuit of trade, had opened, occupied the thoughts and the energies of the best men and women in England; and trade continually widened the circle of discovery, and brought new fields under the culture of civilisation and the Gospel.

And the ministry of commerce to man was never more large and noble in its possible scope than at this moment. The whole world is rapidly becoming one great household. It needs but the

brotherhood to make it a household of faith. It is a matter for Englishmen to be thankful for, that during the last year, in which the two foremost continental peoples have been close locked in deadly conflict, and have filled Europe with wreck and death, we have been laying down our ocean telegraphs, and perfecting the commercial communications of the world. And I firmly believe that what Englishmen in the main care for in their commerce is the work, the play and the strain of their powers. Deep down under all our commercial and industrial activity, there is the love of hard work in the English nature, and the feeling that God sent us here for hard work, and that the daily calling, whatever it may be, is the work ordained to us, and at which we are to strain our strength. I want you to feel, young friends, how worthy the work is of noble doing. I want you to see how much higher meaning there is in it, and how much richer and nobler fruit grows out of it, than can possibly be represented by gold. Study what heaven means by the institution of commerce, what God is working by it, and come up to the help of the Lord, the help of the Lord against the mighty—the mighty rout of lies, and lusts, and tricks, and snares which so foully disfigure it, and are turning one of the Lord's chief instruments of

blessing into one of the devil's chief instruments of cursing mankind.

Believe that if you open the inner eye to the higher aspects and bearings of trade, it offers as fair a field as any other God-given calling for the exercise of your loftiest and manliest powers. Beware of dividing yourself into the man and the tradesman. Be the man throughout; the man who can enter into God's counsel about humanity, and can help Him to work out His great plan for the education of our race. The redemption of commerce, as well as of everything else, can only come from letting the light of God in upon it, understanding what God meant it to be, and then handling it devoutly as a thing which has a sacredness of its own—a temple which has its own altar of sacrifice, and its shrine of truth.

And that you may be a trader after this loftier pattern, set the Lord always before you. In no calling can a man hope to live nobly, faithfully, justly, but by constant fellowship with God. Least of all in the commercial arena, as the battle is fought and the race is run in these keenly competitive days. You must fall back on your Christianity to sustain and justify you in your commercial well-doing; no meaner stay will stand the strain. You must remind yourself daily that

"Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of the mouth of God doth man live."

You must believe in, and reach a hand through the veil to grasp, the recompence at the resurrection of the just. What the world watches and pines for, though it knows it but dimly, is an art, a statesmanship, a science, and, above all, a commerce, to which the Christian idea shall be a light and an inspiration ; whose work, begun, continued, and ended in God, shall promote evermore His honour and glory among men. Then shall our merchants be princes, and our traffickers the honourable of the earth again.

CHAPTER II.

TRADE: ITS BESETTING SIN.

I HAVE spoken of the essential dignity of commerce. We will consider now its besetting sin.

St. Paul writes, "*The love of money is the root of all evils: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*" Of course such broad assertions must be construed with judgment. It would be absurd to imagine that Paul is blind to all the evil in the world with which, as far as we can see, the love of money has nothing whatever to do. The word translated evil is plural in the original—the root of all evils. This may mean of all kinds of evil, speaking generally; in which sense the experience of mankind and the world's history amply sustain the apostle's words. It is not a little remarkable that these terribly strong passages about money occur in the later epistles of St. Paul. He speaks of it to Timothy with peculiar intensity; in which, however, he is rivalled by St. James. It is as though after the year 60 A.D., that is, about one

generation after the death of the Lord, these watchful shepherds saw in the Church the rise and growth of the fatal power of Mammon, and anticipated from the love of money more dishonour to the Gospel, more wrong and harm to souls, than from all the forces of the world and the devil besides. There is something almost terrible in the language in which St. James and St. Paul join in denouncing this damning sin (James ii. 1—9, v. 1—6; 1 Tim. vi. 5—12, 17—19).

I think it is clear that as the love and the zeal of the first generation, the men who "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need," * died out, the love of money, the world's most deadly poison-plant, sprang up in its room, and threatened to wither with its blighting breath all those fair fruits of the Spirit which

* There is much that is very interesting in the communistic principle which was partially, but not wholly, (Mary, the mother of Mark, had a house of her own, Acts xii. 12,) adopted in the Church at Jerusalem. Was this the cause, or partly the cause, of its subsequent poverty, which threw it on the care of the Gentile Churches? (Acts xi. 27—30; 1 Cor. xvi. 1—3.) The same rule seems to have been adopted by the Pilgrim Fathers in the early days of the settlement. In Young's collection of documents relating to the Pilgrims there is a curious record of the reasons for its abandonment, which are not without significance for these days.

were beginning to make earth's wilderness again like Eden, like the garden of the Lord.

Bad as the love of money is in the world, destructive as it is there of all that is noble, manly, truth-loving, and kindly in our nature, it is in the Church that its most deadly destructiveness is to be seen. For thirty pieces of silver it sold the Son of God to torture and crucifixion ; it has fattened on the tears, the groans, and the dying agonies of a priest-ridden world since the days of the Pharaohs ; it has carried on a thriving traffic in souls during a thousand years, at any rate, in the metropolis of Christendom ; it has put up for sale God's pardons, Christ's benedictions, and the heavenly blessedness, until the very name of the Church of Christ has stunk in the nostrils of all upright, manly, loyal hearts ; it has driven men in multitudes into the dreary wildernesses of Atheism, as a refuge from the system which Mammon had set up on the throne of the world's metropolis as the kingdom of the Lord.

There are two great charges against the ecclesiastical system of Rome,—indeed, against every priestly system in all countries and in all ages : the one is the corruption of the truth ; the other, the deadlier by far, is the selling of spiritual things for gold. To say that there is a place and time of

discipline between earth's probation and the final judgment, is one thing. It may be right, it may be wrong; we have no call to discuss it here. But to say that money can turn the keys of that house of discipline, and that a bit of gold on the palm of a priest can transfer a soul to the realms of glory, is quite another thing; and, of all errors and heresies, is, I believe, the most damnable in the sight of God. To say that the prayers of souls departed can still win blessings for those whom they have left behind them in the flesh, or that the living can help the dead by prayer, is one thing; but to say that a fee to a priest can set this effectual prayer in motion, is another thing. The one may be an error, the other is deadlier than an error; it is a prostitution of spirit, a blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

When I think how every intellectual doubt and error has been made spiritually malignant, the moment that a money-grasping Church got a hand upon it; when I try to estimate the starving hunger of souls through ages, which have been fed with the stuff—the words, the forms, the lies—which a bit of money could purchase, instead of with the living bread of God's word; when I remember how the bread of life has been corrupted, and the water of life has been poisoned, while generations have

been left to wander in anguish and despair outside the pale of that Church which ought to have been to them the gate of heaven, I seem to understand the apostle's words. I know that the spirit which can take the most life-giving things, and so poison them, and can so pollute the divine, must have in it the very essence, the root of evil, and I see how men who *will* be rich "*fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*" "*But thou, man of God, flee these things.*" Hate Mammon, the god of this world, with whole-hearted intensity, "*and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, patience, meekness, and love.*"

We will first ask ourselves how it is that, while such manifest evils are in the world, such manifold sins from manifold sources, Paul can speak of the love of money as the root of all evils.

What is money? I am not propounding the puzzle which Sir Robert Peel proposed to the House of Commons, What is a pound? and which I am told the wisest economists are puzzling over still. Mine is a much wider question, and much simpler. What is money morally, as a thing which can be an object to, and can act upon, the moral man? Money is simply the world coined down, so that we can carry it about with us, and do with

it just what we please. If a man has a sovereign in his pocket, he has just so much of the world as a sovereign will buy in a portable form, and he can convert it when and how he pleases. That currency is always convertible. Man fell by loving things external, things that touched his appetite and fired his ambition, more than things internal, things which would feed and strengthen his soul. Money is just this external in the most condensed and portable form. The rich man has the world to wait on him. The richest have the world forcing on them its harlot attractions, and laying all its pleasures constantly at their very feet. Get rich, and all that flesh can wish is at your instant disposal. Mansions, equipages, horses, dinners, balls, theatres, operas, wine, mistresses, dresses, jewels, pictures, statues, books, visits, entry into the selectest circles, journeys through the fairest scenes with the utmost luxury of attendance—all that the heart of the flesh can lust after, and the thirst of the flesh drink in, is yours if you care for it, if you have gold. Gold panders easily to lust, hatred, malice, revenge. There is hardly a passion or an appetite which does not demand money before it can become pampered, and therefore, says the apostle, the love of money, that is, the love of what it buys, is the root of all evil.

It is the god of this world. Get enormous wealth, no matter how; no matter how many wasted widows and stunted children are crying out to heaven day and night against you, and such slavish adulation and worship as the world knows not beside, are yours. Hudson's statue is not forgotten yet. We are getting, one would fain hope, as a people, into a somewhat nobler mood about such matters; but I suppose a very rich man, who had the power, too, of making rich, would not find much trouble in getting peers to drink his wine, shoot his game, and court his daughters; bishops to usher his infants into the kingdom of heaven; and politicians to make good berths, at the public cost, for his sons. And why? Because money represents, more than anything else in the world, that which most men by nature love. Give those who "mind the flesh and the things of the flesh" money enough, and there is no bound to the fleshly satisfactions which it brings within their reach. All that the flesh pines for is contained in essence in a bag of gold. If a man minds the higher things, the bag of gold is no more to him than a gay ball-room would be to a woman who was nursing her dearest through some deadly sickness; but if the "love of the world and the things of the world" is dominant, or even struggling for the

mastery, money is a terrible addition to the weight which is dragging the soul down, and drowning it in destruction and perdition. It is just the most tempting thing to the soul within easy touch of its hand; it needs an angel's purity and a martyr's constancy to endure the strain.

One is often profoundly saddened to see how money perverts and destroys justice as between man and man and man and society. How constantly a poor man goes to the hulks for knaveries for which a rich man goes to the chairmanship of a Board, or higher! It is amusing, too,—yet there is sadness in this also,—to see how men who, when they were poor and struggling, were not thought much of,—in fact, were a little sneered at,—get wisdom in the world's judgment as their account swells at their banker's, and at last get listened to by the wits and scholars of their times. And yet probably the man is as much a fool and half as honest, as in the old days of toil and obscurity; but he is good now for half a million, and so the world is at his feet.

It was said of Barnabas, "*He was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith.*" This same Barnabas once "*having land sold it, and brought the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet.*" He was a good man. I fancy "good man" means some-

thing quite other in the commercial cant of the day. Money is the world's god. Men idolize it, and of all their idolatries it is the most fruitful to them in crimes and miseries. You may think probably that the apostle puts the matter too strongly here, that there are worse things than the love of money in the world, and things more destructive to the bodies and souls of men. But we may not forget that man's most damning crime had love of money at the root of it. He who betrayed the Saviour to the cross bare the bag, and the chink of the silver first put the infernal project into his heart. It has suggested, without question, the most hellish murders, the most fiendish cruelties, the most wasting exterminations, which are recorded in history. It was the lust of money that withered the weak Indian races before the steps of Spanish conquest. It was lust of money which, again in retribution, swept the Spanish main with the ships of the Buccaneers, and wrote a chapter in the history of horrors which will remain dark in the records of hell. Parricide, matricide, fratricide, and whatever has deepest dye in the catalogue of crime, are its lawful children. The strongest bonds of society, the tenderest passions and sentiments of the soul, the most sacred sanctions of laws divine and human, are in deadly

peril where this demon has seized the human heart as his throne. It gathers up into one fell head all that is most hateful to God and deadly to men in this evil world, and as the god of the world, Mammon, it challenges the throne. The Saviour, speaking in words of supreme beauty and power of the great choice that is before men—of life and death, good and evil, the world and heaven—selects this as the world's representative. "*No man can serve two masters. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.*" The strong and sweeping assertion of the apostle is sustained thus by the most sacred lips.

The fruit of the love of money is set forth by the apostle in the most terribly emphatic, and some may be tempted to think exaggerated, words. "*The love of money is the root of all evils: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*" This word covet is the key to the passage; it describes a longing and habit of the soul. God made the world, and God maintains the world, though man has made it an idol. God made the senses and their satisfactions, man makes them the organs of sin. There is a noble, healthy use of all things, which in abuse become deadly. The world is a good servant, the senses are good instru-

ments; all work harmoniously while the soul's love is not set on them; while the soul is queen, and queenlike guards her crown. We shall have a world around us, and organs, senses if you will, in eternity. But there the soul will know God as its portion; and all around it, all its faculties and possessions, will be but the means of realizing and comprehending Him.

It is the man who gives his soul to the love of gold to whom Paul's words are a warning, and what is called the world is a deadly snare, more especially in an age which seems to have made gold its god.

And let me beg you, young friends, to consider that it is a passion which grows mightily by being fed. It is not to the young man, the poor man, the struggling man, that the words apply, otherwise than as a warning for the future. It is to the man who has tasted the wine cup, the man who is getting rich, and has had a deep sip of the power and pleasure which riches always present to their possessor's lips. It is like the taste of blood to the tiger. Keep him low upon milk food, he shall be gentle and docile; let him lick one blood-drop, and the brutal fury leaps like flame through every limb and organ, and no man can master him then. The time when a man is growing rich is the time of

deadly peril. No common grace in such an age as this can keep the love of it, the passion for it, out of his heart. Let it enter, and mark the inevitable result. He errs from the faith.

And here let me say at once, that there may be no misunderstanding about this vital matter, a man may keep in high repute as a religionist, say his creed, the creed of the Church, heartily and constantly, have much influence in religious movements, and much zeal for the kingdom of God; nay, he may have these in strong development, and win celebrity by their display, and be erring from the faith the while, in the sense which the apostle means. Remember, it was in an attempt to gain a name in the Church for liberality and zeal, even in what was not demanded or expected, or in any wise regarded as a badge of profession, that the typical money lovers in the Church were slain (Acts v. 1—11). To Christian men having lands and money, and who love the praise of men, this is a very solemn, almost awful chapter. Zeal, liberality, unwonted self-sacrifice, may with a money-lover easily be a lie, and may just be a bribe to heaven to be allowed to cherish the root of all evil within. I do not think that failing orthodoxy is the way in which in these days an erring from the faith will show itself. In the days when the Church was pure

and earnest, a money-lover was soon driven out ; and Demas, if he loved the world, must part from St. Paul. But "the faith" is a broad word, and in this connection includes the whole spiritual truth, the light about life, duty, and eternity, which the Lord has brought into the world.

It is in the faith that it shall profit a man nothing, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. A man errs from the faith when his daily joy is over what he gains from the world, instead of over the truth, peace, light, joy, hope, which he may gain in his own heart ; when he reckons a heavy balance at his banker's a provision for his children, instead of that culture of spiritual faculty which will assure to them the presence and the help of God ; when in the daily battle between interest and duty, hoarding and charity, he lets the hoard accumulate, and charity keep her rags ; when he secures the interests eagerly in a moment, and lets the duties await a convenient time ; when he begins to take the measure of a man by his station and prospects, and of a woman by her father's rank and her certificate in gold ; when he is tempted to watch for a worldly prize in the settlement of his sons and daughters, instead of for a man or a woman who will be a helpmeet through life, and a comrade in eternity ; when his manner chills and

freezes all who come to him for help and counsel ; when he stands on his dignities and vanities, and becomes pompous and exacting, saying by his manner as plainly as ever Pharisee said it, Stand by, I am richer than thou. These are the ways in which a man may now-a-days err from the faith, while his orthodoxy is without stain or flaw.

Christ's disciples were to draw the weary and heavy laden, and lead them to His bosom ; they were to preach by their living the supremacy of truth, righteousness, and the love of God, in all that concerns the weal of souls, the happiness of homes, the glory of states. They were to be witnesses daily on earth for the judgments of heaven and the sympathies of the angels—their fellowship with all that is noble, honest, manly, hearty, modest, gentle, and pure. And he whose manner, the emanation and influence of whose spirit, preaches directly the reverse, and checks, subverts, and withers all that in warm young hearts and warm young lives Christ loves and God upholds, denies the faith, and is worse than an infidel. He is as a false light or a wavering compass to the sailor ; it lures him to his ruin on the very rocks from which it promised to keep him clear. The more pompous that man's orthodoxy, the more legally strict that man's charity, the worse does he

wander ; plunging, floundering on in the quagmire for which he has forsaken the Rock of Ages, till he drowns his soul in destruction and perdition at last.

Very solemn, too, would seem the last clause of the apostle's warning, could we take the veil off the homes and the hearts of the richest and most prosperous men. "*Pierced through with many sorrows.*" "God knows," says many an one with bleeding heart, whose successes and possessions are the subject of universal envy, "God knows that that is the truth." Love, communion of kindred souls, is the one great joy of the heart of man. He who heaps up riches rarely fails to bring a devil of hate, discord, and dissoluteness into his home. Daughters whose cordial love and whose natural simplicity it was a joy to witness, grow "accomplished" and vain, and envy rankles and cankers where love once sang and shone. A wife who was a true loving partner of the years of toil and ill-requited endeavour, always ready as a wife should be, with the real strength, the strength of the Lord, to refit the husband when worn down and disheartened in the strife, now thinks only of dress, amusements, and "society," where society is none ; she rarely has time to exchange a word with him about the deeper things on which they once held

blessed communion, and becomes more vain, flip-pant, selfish, and useless day by day. The sons, mixing in "good society," and taking their fill of its vices, drinking, gambling, rioting, and learning how to dissipate most utterly the money which they hope he will leave them before long. The home, once a rose bower, now a bed of thorns, from which the dull, dry business even is a welcome escape. His interest in everything, even in money, dropping rapidly to zero, while a kind of deadly consciousness steals over him, that, bad as the present is, there is something more terrible to come—that his routine religion is not faith, that his vain expectation is not hope, that the gospel has been dishonoured in his life, God has been wronged, Christ has been denied, and that the fate of Dives may after all be his own. "*Pierced through with many sorrows.*" Can any words describe it more perfectly? Were not the beggar's crust with contentment a heavenly lot, compared with the toil, care, discord, and dread in which many a rich one has lived since he erred from the faith, and took the love of riches into his home and into his heart?

Pity the sorrows of the poor. But few poor homes can mate the rich ones for poverty of soul, strife of temper, and agony of heart.

Well, some one may say, this is surely a strange thing. Money is essential to us here. The getting it keeps the mainspring of our commerce in motion; and the having it is, in ordinary circumstances, the natural result of talent and industry in a profession or trade; and yet what a curse it brings! No, that is precisely what it does not bring—a curse; it may bring a bright blessing. We bring the curse to it by loving it. That is not God's work; it is the fruit of our own evil, self-willed hearts. Money enters so largely, so necessarily, into all man's transactions, that we may be sure that it is capable of a very divine use, and may be made the effective hand-maid of the soul. Rightly looked at, it is a great gift; rightly handled, it is a great blessing to you and to the world. The man who loves it takes home, as I have said, a curse to live with him. The man who holds it as a trust may make it so largely fruitful to him in blessing, as that he may bear its fruits with him at last into the everlasting habitations. That which is spiritual satisfies the spirit. Connect money with that which is spiritual, and make it nourish your higher life. Scatter it in blessing, and multiply your joys. I put it simply on your present interests, your present joy, if it is to be worth the name. No amount of eating, drinking, feasting, decorating, travelling, visiting, and the

like, can compare for one moment with the pleasure which a man takes in life when, having cared with temperate wisdom for his own household, he founds an institution with the fortune with which God has blessed him ; or rather, let me say, for institutions are questionable blessings, sets many energetic agencies at work for helping and blessing his fellow-men. The man who is using his money for the good of those who have it not,—not in the peddling way now in fashion, giving a five-pound or a hundred-pound note to this society and that society, but on the grand scale common ages ago, when men believed in good works, though they had some wrong thoughts about them,—has a perpetual object of interest in his life, a perpetual fountain of joy in his heart, such as the men with the liberal eye only know.

How many rich Christians could live famously, as well as any man has any business to live, on half what they have hoarded, and could make their old age happy and honoured, and their names illustrious for ages, by spending the other in some great work which would make every day bright with the noblest joy. Few seem to think of giving on the scale of ancient charity ; not to societies, to be lost in the mass, and too often muddled away by committees, but for works which God and man need to

have done for the bodies, the homes, and the souls of men. We want to pitch our ambition to a higher strain. The best rooms, the best horses, the best wines, in a neighbourhood, satisfy the ambition of many a nature which has a divine tincture in it, and would soar high if it could ever get on the wing. Would that a passionate ambition for "the blessing of the poor, and of him that is ready to perish," might once more seize on those whose confession makes them God's almoners of mankind ! Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. And begin now. "*When riches increase, set not your heart upon them.*" Now, before they have mastered you, set to work to master them ; make them serve your soul by making them serve mankind. Begin with the little, the noble habit which will one day administer the abundance ; and God will bless the work of your hands, and daily as you scatter will increase your store. Riches may thus be nobly fruitful in works of intellect, of scholarship, of artistic power, of divine charity ; and that trade, whose drudgery you are sometimes tempted to scorn, will furnish with works of sacred and eternal beauty your mansion in the skies.

CHAPTER III.

TRADE : ITS CONDUCT AND LEGITIMATE PRIZE.

THE age in which we live is regarded popularly as the age of commerce. The commercial interests and relations of men are held to supply the mainspring of our manifold activity. It is most true, though probably in a deeper sense than those who repeat the popular platitude mean. Twenty-five years ago it would have been true in a much more material sense. The great free-trade agitation had for years fully occupied the public mind, and the constant and earnest consideration—not one whit too earnest—of the commercial interests of classes and countries had generated the idea, which had an outward likeness of truth about it, that all the strife and confusion of the world arose from a misunderstanding of interests, and that if men could but be got to look steadily at their commercial need of each other, all the arts of the devil and of the diplomatists could not drive them into war.

The tremendous movements of society since that era have dissipated that dream. The most deadly struggle of passions and principles which the world has ever known, in which interests the most vast and manifest were cast recklessly to the winds, has made the last twenty-five years the most eventful in human history. One lesson at any rate has been wrought deeply into the world's heart by all that it has suffered. It no longer dreams that withes of interest and material ministry can tame the passions of men, and compose their discords. And it has learnt too, perhaps, that, as compared with the bankers and manufacturers, the politicians and even the diplomatists have a larger function of service than the leaders of our commercial revolution allowed their followers to dream. The uppermost thoughts in men's minds during the last quarter of a century have distinctly not been commercial, and yet perhaps the most express characteristic of things is commercial still. Nothing I think is more remarkable in the representatives of commercial ideas and interests in our public life, than the narrow reading which they give to the meaning of their own words. One would think, from the way in which they talk, that the one thing with which commerce concerns itself was buying in the cheapest and selling in the

dearest market, and that the one nexus which it can supply was that of material interest as represented by money or its equivalents. The truth is, that, since the age of the free-trade dreamers, commerce has lifted itself to a quite higher level; I venture to think, as I have expressed at large in the first chapter, that it is its original and native sphere. It has mixed itself deeply with the political life of Europe and America, and has touched all the great social and political questions which occupy the attention and interest of mankind. It has established new principles of national relation, and has even revolutionized the art of war. In any other than a commercial age, an age of intense commercial activity and genius, a winter siege of Paris, for instance, would have been impossible. But still more strikingly it has developed a profound relation to the most important social and political questions of the time, and indeed of all times. It has created a working class whose intelligence, industry, and indisputable weight in the country has forced the citadel of middle-class government, and has introduced an entirely new spirit into the conduct of political affairs, the range of whose force we very imperfectly calculate yet. It has further brought to the front, and this is its crowning achievement, the question of questions in all

societies, and the mother of some of the most tremendous convulsions that have ever shaken the world—the relation of capital and labour, property and industry, the toiling many and the privileged few, and the true idea and function of the State. It has introduced that question, which has made itself heard as the distant muttering of a tempest for ages, into the forefront of the public questions of the day.

It is significant, too, that those very moral ideas and obligations, in connection with commerce, which the middle-class view of it has persistently ignored, are made fundamental in every Socialist programme. Commerce, instead of supplying a nexus of interest which will gently bind all classes and peoples in bonds of Arcadian sweetness, will, as its first great work, at any rate, now that it is fairly emancipated and can look round it, set the two great classes to try their strength and to adjust their claims by struggle, with a fierceness and doggedness which has had no parallel in the past history of the world—except, perhaps, in the interior struggles of republican Rome, which in this matter, as well as in others, is in a very wonderful way the mother of modern civilisation—its father is from a higher world. Of the benign ministry of commerce, as of an infinitely benigner

ministry, it must be said, that it has not come to send peace on earth, but a sword.

These words are simply by way of introduction to a very plain and practical address to young men of business, on the special temptations of business-life in such an age as this, and its legitimate prize.

The first and most earnest exhortation which I would offer to a young man of business, looking forward to a commercial career, is, Believe in it heartily, and work at it as one who has been set to work at it by the great Master, and who is called in this way to increase the wealth of the world, and the comfort and happiness of men. All are not called to be authors, artists, or preachers; but all are called; and you, it may be, are called to this. Providence has marked it out for you, shut you up to it, and given you a special capacity and aptitude which trade will both employ and educate for yet higher use. And let such an one clearly understand that he who sends good calicoes, woollens, or hardwares, into the market, who improves either the texture or the pattern of the goods which are consumed by the poor, who beautifies some common household implement, or sends into the market a new material which will cheapen or improve the staple consumption of the world, does a work whose greatness is all too little recognized, and of

which his balance at the banker's is quite the poorest fruit. Create a beautiful colour, shape, or pattern in some common material, and machinery will send millions of them abroad to gladden the hearts and to educate the eyes of men in all regions of the habitable world. That is a work, surely, to work at heartily, joyfully, as a painter at his easel, a scholar at his desk. Such a vocation must be as much from heaven as any vocation of man. Believe in your work, then, and honour it by your entire energy; and remember that in the pursuit of it some of the noblest and purest pleasures known to man may be enjoyed.

No doubt there is much to uplift and to educate men, I mean the manhood that is in them, in a life of commercial activity. But many an one who will read these pages will know that there is much, on the other hand, in the present conduct of business, to depress, to degrade, and to destroy. Our commerce, as compared with more primitive commerce, is distinctly and even vehemently competitive; and competition, which is the soul of commerce, as we understand it, has a terrible tendency to treat the moral element in a man and in a society as a thing which must be cleared out of its way. The trade machine, which can use up stuff and shoddy of all sorts, threatens to work up the hearts

and souls, the principles, beliefs, sympathies, and aspirations of mankind. The tendency of competition is to fix thought on price, rather than quality, as it furnishes a much easier standard of comparison; and cheap trash for a time commands the markets in every trade. The tricks and shifts to compass cheapness in every art and industry are infinite. Every man knows perfectly well, and often bitterly enough, the tricks that are current in the trade which he may be struggling hard to carry on in a more honest and manly way.

It runs through all arts and callings. Preachers, legislators, lawyers, merchants, shopkeepers, artisans, are all pressed by it; and the root of it lies, not in the specialties of any particular calling, but in the low tone of the moral life, the success and popularity-hunting of our times. We who are behind the scenes in the religious world do not like much that we see there, any more than much that we see in the trade world. I have known as much dishonesty in getting up a public meeting, in manufacturing public opinion, or even in the discharge of the most sacred duties, as there can possibly be in selling short measure, giving false samples, salting invoices, or "shaving the ladies." But God hates it both behind the counter and in His temple, and hates it equally. For man's life is His temple, and

all its crafts and callings are chapels thereof, to be filled with the music of His service, and perfumed with the incense of His praise.

And this temptation to base, false, or underhand dealing meets a man on the very threshold of his career, and will attend him to its close. It is the easily besetting sin of such an age as this ; and the main safeguard against it must be a principle that is rooted in faith in God. You must go out into life with the assurance that a price will continually be offered to you, be pressed upon you, for your principles ; that the devil will always be urging on you a bargain for your soul. Fortify yourself at once by the conviction that there is that within you which worlds ought not to buy of you ; which, if you sold it for the vast universe, would beggar you by the trade. You must take into your account the whole of your being, and the whole of eternity, and ask, What has the world to offer, if I sell them ? You, too, are a King's son. You have to seek a kingdom, as well as a morsel of bread, in your daily trade. Be firm, be true, be loyal to duty, and some day you will enter into possession of worlds beyond the stars ; and roaming from sphere to sphere, drinking in all the joy and the splendour of the new creation, you will learn what is meant by the saving of a soul. And is it worth

a man's while to sell that, that he may pick half-pence out of the dirt-heap of dishonest traffic, or go to bed with a few stolen shillings or pounds in his pocket, with the remembrance haunting him that it is a thief's portion, and the certainty that it has raised up a fresh barrier between his soul and heaven? Conquer the temptation at once; meet it in the gate, and throttle it there. Refuse peremptorily to have anything to do with a business or a transaction which demands such compliances. And suppose that bread even fails you—it may; a man may have to face that extremity—what then? Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, imagination hath not conceived, what God hath prepared for those who in such a glorious strife overcome. Oh! could we but stir up ourselves to understand what we are losing daily by our selfish, grasping habits, and how much all base gain truly costs us before God, we should fly from the houses and the transactions which tempt us to dishonest traffic as Lot fled from Sodom, content to escape anyhow, if we might but take forth with us the integrity of our hearts.

Nothing can firmly fortify a man against such temptations, which haunt the very air we breathe, but a heart set on higher things. "Honesty is the best policy," we say. Of course it is the best policy. God did not so arrange the world as to make

it in the long run sustain the devil's arguments, and consecrate his success. But beware of thinking that the mere policy of honesty will carry you very far against the dead set of the current. Understand at once that it is not a thing of policy, but of duty, and that it belongs to quite another sphere than that in which policies rule. Whether your fortune on earth sustain your integrity or not, God sustains it, and your heavenly fortune will sustain it eternally. Here it is simply a question of right, let what may come of it. Do the right, fly the wrong, in your business affairs, as you shall answer it at the dreadful day of judgment; nor dare to rob yourself of the answer of a good conscience, when you stand at that bar, for the empire of the world. Day by day pray, "*Lead me not into temptation,*" and mean it. Review your transactions, not in the light of the customs of business, but in the light of the law of God. See Him walking daily in your streets and markets, as well as in your sanctuaries; inspecting your ledgers, bill-books, invoices, and balances, as well as your creeds and confessions; and let your moral nature go forth and breathe itself in all the transactions of your daily life. I have no doubt that there is large exaggeration in the popular religious view of commercial cheats and tricks. Still the most thoughtful

observers compel us to believe that the temptation on a young man is tremendous. He needs to be armed with armour of proof before he enters the arena, and to know how to handle "*the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*"

As for competition itself, the prolific mother of temptation, the great social problem of the age is how to curb and govern it, for it is far too precious an instrument to be destroyed. We have to work it in harmoniously with the superior laws which govern humanity, and leave it but its fair share in the ordering both of commerce and of society. The evils which it works are manifold and manifest, but let us set its benignant ministries fairly in the opposite scale. I cannot speak scornfully of that which has brought within reach of the poorest in the land fabrics, instruments, commodities, which the rich reckoned luxuries a century ago. It has spread throughout the world the ministries of man to his fellow, it has brought distant regions into fruitful contact, and opened paths through the wildest wildernesses and the stormiest seas. It has sown broadcast the seeds of intelligence, it has brought education home to every man's door, it has placed governments before the bar of public opinion, and brought the commercial common sense and directness to bear on our public affairs. This is quite

too noble an instrument to be destroyed. But noble as it is, we must see to it that we remain its masters, and rule over it instead of suffering it to rule over us. I know that this is commercial heresy—any suggestion which touches so as to govern and to limit the sacred power of competition. But it is worth the while of our commercial wise ones to remember that Socialism proposes to limit it by means of a very simple but very trenchant and effectual kind. And Socialism is an advancing power, some thoughtful observers think *the* advancing power. And it is mainly because commerce rejects the intervention of moral restraints, and limits, and laws, that the communistic idea progresses. I am persuaded that the vital question of the commerce of our times is this, Can those who have now the conduct of it so rule and handle it as to make it minister to the moral development of society? or shall it be destroyed in its present form, root and branch, by those who profess and believe, rightly or wrongly, that they can and will?

But one great blessing attends our commerce. Competition gives rare scope for talent, and men of the lower class, of hard brain, strong bone, firm muscle, work to the front, and continually renew the vigour of its life. But then the moment they are in the front rank they enter the charmed circle.

Pass a few years, and they will be shrinking with horror from the thought of their daughter marrying a fine, strong, brave, energetic young fellow, who gave promise of power to win his way upward, but who would have to wait, and work, and grow strong, before he gained the prize. I pray such to remember through life that their years of struggle were their best years. Do not seek to save your sons, and the men to whom you commit your daughters, the same ennobling discipline. Do not foolishly give them the kingdom ready conquered to their hand. Lay up more in them, and less out of them; and if you seek to leave them safe as you dream against the pangs and perils of poverty, do not spare them the necessity of a vigorous and healthy struggle for the position and influence which they are to occupy during the mature years of life.

And take care lest you get too rich yourselves. "*Children, how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!*" The more that I see of the effect of riches, the more meaning do I seem to see in the Saviour's words. There is a way of thinking of and looking at life, and of talking about men and things, which I have often seen in those who have grown rich, which marks them out as the beggars of eternity. You are

lusting for flesh, some of you, mad to be rich. Beware lest God send you flesh, feed you with it, cram you with it, and then send leanness into your souls for ever.

The question of "a fortune" cannot be excluded from the contemplation of a trader. The artist, the preacher, the scholar, the statesman, get far richer enjoyment *in* their work, and far more precious fruit from it, in the process of the fulfilment of its duties. The trader may fairly set before himself a moderate fortune as the reward of his commercial toil. But few indeed are the men who know when that point is reached; the point when they have gained enough to enjoy, and yet have not exhausted the power of enjoying it. There is a point where the man and his fortune are, so to speak, fairly balanced; when he can handle it as a master, and make it a power of true blessing to himself, to his family, and to his fellow-men. There is a wide rich field in which money can serve mankind, and do very noble and even divine work. The trader who carries a fortune out of his business before he has yet quite exhausted *himself*, is the man by whom that field, one would think, could be most successfully cultivated. He is the man to take this department of the world's life and progress mainly under his charge. The energy, skill, and discrimi-

nation which his business life has cultivated, ought to give him a special advantage in applying himself to the service of the State and the care of the higher interests of society. But unhappily the men seem to be rare who are able to tear themselves from a prosperous business when this point of balance is gained. Men plod on and on in business, till the faculties and interests are fairly absorbed by it. A great fortune becomes their one aim in life, and its increase their supreme care ; and then for all the higher uses to which the world can put a man, they are dead.

But on these and kindred points of interest in the life of a man of business I have dwelt so largely in former works, that I feel indisposed to linger on them here. And a preacher dealing with these themes has always a painful consciousness that his words have a thoroughly unpractical and even impracticable look about them to those who have to carry on the work of this world, who are in the thick of the commercial throng, are nursed in the traditions of business, and are naturally impatient of words of warning and counsel from those who occupy the room of the unlearned, and who would be sure, men of business think, to make a dismal failure if they were to try themselves to work out the principles they expound. There can be no

doubt that the Christian doctrine on these and kindred themes looks at first sight revolutionary. But the Gospel aims at no sudden or violent subversion of existing methods and ideas. The revolution at which it aims is, so to speak, too radical to be violent; it deals too deeply with the vital springs to be sudden. It seeks to change the whole tone of the thought, the will, the love; and then from within it works itself out slowly and patiently in the life.

There is no fear of a too rapid change in the principles on which trade has been hitherto conducted, unless a John the Baptist visits us. And traders may profitably listen to us sometimes, as we try to set forth how the struggle appears to us who watch it calmly from a distance. It is possible that we may be better able than the combatants to trace the set of the currents which sweep the whole struggling mass on their flood, and to indicate the direction in which development seems likely to proceed. We can but set forth ideas, principles to believe in, ends to aim at; there is no fear of their being attained too soon.

And commerce, it seems to us, is entering on a new and altogether higher stage of its development. It is relating itself very vitally, on the one hand, to the government of the country, and, on the other,

to the profoundest of social questions—the condition and destinies of the great mass of the poor. It is a most significant sign of the times that commerce has had the training of the ablest men who are now occupied in the higher departments of the public service, and who are designated by public opinion for large service in the future. This relation to the public service and the government of the country is an immense gain in every way to the business world. Its narrow, selfish, and exclusive traditions will be broken down, the range of its interest and activity will be widened, by this contact with the greatest work which this world offers to the human spirit—the ruling of mankind. In a thousand ways, difficult if not impossible to trace, commerce will be enlarged and elevated by the presence of its picked men in the Legislature and in the Cabinet. It is in the way now of being wrought in harmoniously with the general movement and progress of society, which but lately it seemed to obstruct in a very selfish and hopeless way. Traders will become less and less a caste, or even a class; and the most narrowing and depressing influence of their calling will be done away.

But while trade is thus relating itself visibly to the highest political concerns of men on the one hand, on the other the set of the current of the

times is compelling it to relate itself in earnest, and with a high purpose, to the condition of the great mass of the people. The idea that the order of the commercial sphere rests on the permanence of the two great classes, the employers and the employed, that the master has simply to pay the man his fair day's wage for his fair day's work, and the relation is complete, will no longer stand against the growing pressure of opinion. The conviction is spreading that commerce is bound to make itself the minister of the welfare and progress of the great company of the workmen, in some higher senses than simply assuring to them a daily dole. Powers are at work which will compel the admission of the workman to some substantial share in the general increase of the wealth of the community. The legislation of the last quarter of a century has placed no small share of political power in the hands of the proletariat. It is inevitable that they should seek to use that power to raise their class, as a class, in the scale of social advantage and power, and to give them something of the master's position, rights, and elevating duties, in the general industrial activity of the nation.

The present and pressing problem of commerce seems to be how to meet that need, without that

universal levelling which Communism proposes, and which would make this earthly life a vast, dreary, monotonous waste. Commerce must study the moral as well as the economic problem, and make the elevation of the industrial class to the higher level a distinct aim and effort. It must try to purge from the heart of the labourer that bitterness and envy which is engendered by the spectacle of the enormous wealth produced largely by his industry, but from which he gets nothing but a practically uniform wage. It may thus become the handmaid of the Gospel in working out consciously and intelligently the benign purpose which, from the first days of Judaism and Christianity, the Kingdom of Heaven has held steadily in sight—the redemption of the poor.

